

Hafa Adai!

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\$1

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Nearly 500 ARPA-funded personnel instructed not to return after Dec. 31

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**
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REPORTER

Nearly 500 CNMI government employees who were employed using American Rescue Plan Act, or ARPA, funds have been instructed not to return to work following the expiration of their contracts last Dec. 31, 2022.

In a news briefing hosted by the transition and inauguration team of governor-elect Arnold Palacios and lieutenant governor-elect David Apatang on Monday, it was reported that

nearly 500 government employees were let go following the expiration of their ARPA-funded positions.

Transition Committee chair Claudio Norita stated that the

transition teams that made their way through government agencies within the CNMI determined that there are nearly 500 people whose contracts

were funded by ARPA and have officially expired.

"Office of Personnel Management issued the only valid directive to ensure the govern-

ment is not liable. The people whose ARPA-funded contracts expired received guidance from OPM that instruct-

See ARPA on Page 4

BOOST investigating committee moves to deliberation

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**
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REPORTER

The House of Representatives' joint committee that is looking into the Torres' administration's Building Optimism, Opportunities, and Stability Together Program

or BOOST program, has officially moved to the deliberation part of its investigative proceedings.

This comes soon after the conclusion of Bank of Saipan employee and BOOST Program administrator Karen Kalen's testi-

mony last Thursday.

According to co-chair Rep. Celina Babauta (D-Saipan), the joint committee will deliberate on the documents received from the witnesses, including correspondence among all those involved and

See BOOST on Page 4



WELCOMING 2023

A grand fireworks display was set off at the Papago home of Jose "Joe" and Marcia Ayuyu during the McDonald's Guam and Saipan owners' New Year's party last Jan. 1. The New Year's party, which doubled as a Thanksgiving event for a successful 2022, had friends, family, and business partners in attendance.

MARK RABAGO

Ex-law clerk sues presiding judge

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**
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REPORTER

A former law clerk of Superior Court Presiding Judge Roberto Naraja is suing his former employer for allegedly spying on him virtually even after his contract had already expired.

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INSIDE



BUSINESS

The New Year's countdown party at the Hyatt Regency Saipan in 2022 was one for the books.

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ASIA

The death toll from a devastating Christmas flooding in the Philippines has climbed to 51.

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LIFE & STYLE

Jeremy Renner suffered blunt chest trauma and orthopedic injuries in a snow plow accident in Nevada.

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Local

Saipan Mayor's Office transition is done and 'went well'

By LEIGH GASES

leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
Reporter

With just five days left before the inauguration of the new administration on Jan. 9, the Saipan Mayor's Office is now ready and prepared for mayor-elect Ramon "RB" Camacho to take the reins after a smooth transition of power.

On Jan. 9, 2023, at 8:30am, Camacho will be officially sworn into office by U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona in front of the Saipan Mayor's Office in Oleai. Camacho will be joined by his family. Invitations have been sent to Guam mayors, the Office of the Consulate of Japan, and members of the Legislature, among others.

Lieutenant governor-elect David M. Apatang wasn't available for an interview or comment, but it was learned from Henry Hofschneider, special assistant to the mayor, during an interview last week that the transition is done and it "went well."

Camacho's transition team met with the current team at the Saipan Mayor's Office

about two weeks ago with written requests submitted, then a meeting was held with Camacho to inform him about what to expect when he assumes his role as mayor.

"We just hope the new mayor comes in and realizes that this work is very important to the local community," said Hofschneider.

Hofschneider also said that Camacho was "very happy to see what this office has done to prepare for him to come in and continue the work of this office. I hope, and Mayor Apatang also hopes, that this mayor-elect, when he assumes office, will continue the work that [Apatang] has been doing. There's still a lot of new other projects that we want to do, but I think we just ran out of time."

Hofschneider assured that Camacho will be coming into what he describes as a "turn-key office," meaning that "there's very little that he has to do within his first two years in office, other than just maintain what's available right now. We have heavy equipment coming—in brand new

ones. We have heavy equipment that we have now that are working. His field operations crew are equipped, they have adequate tools, safety gear, and everything they need to do their work up there safely. The staff are wonderful. His support staff will be here and they're going to continue to do their best to support the mayor."

When asked about Apatang's two terms in office, Hofschneider, who has worked with him in all those eight years, said, "The transformation of this office from late Mayor Donald Flores has gone from a very neglected agency to a fully functioning agency. Mayor Apatang came in, bought new equipment, bought new tools for the operations group. We got this office hooked up to the internet..."

"Also, I think, with accountability, Mayor Apatang did very well. I can vouch for that because I've worked with him for years and he was great, because he constantly asked for our budget status or outstanding liabilities, and all the assets that we acquired. He wanted

to know where they are. Are they broken? Or are they getting fixed? And he worked well with the local delegation and, of course, the governor before the election."

Hofschneider added, "I'd say he did more than anybody else. I'm not putting down the other mayors because times were different and situations were different, but Mayor Apatang came in when the casino law went into effect. That could've been a factor for more revenue, but there was more work, more complexity, I think."

Hofschneider also told Saipan Tribune that he will be stepping down from his role as special assistant this month.

When asked who will be the next special assistant to the mayor, he said it has not been announced yet. "I think anyone can come in and do it. I've been doing it and I think it's pretty easy. But whoever that may be, they must be very resourceful, knowing where to look for information, what resources are out there, and how to get them, and how to use them."



LEIGH GASES

The Saipan Mayor's Office in Oleai.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

NMC offices closed on Jan. 5 and 6

Northern Marianas College employees will be participating in professional development activities throughout this week. The institution will be closed on Thursday and Friday, Jan. 5 and 6, 2023, to maximize employee participation.

Faculty members will also be participating in professional development activities earlier in the week on Wednesday, Jan. 4, 2023; however, administrative offices of the institution, including the Office of Admissions and Records and the Financial Aid Office, will remain open on this day.

Individuals who are seeking assistance in applying for

NMC's spring 2023 semester can email oar@marianas.edu or visit www.marianas.edu/spring2023 for more information. (NMC)

4.3-magnitude quake in Pagan region

At 10:55am on Jan. 3, 2023, a report of a 4.3-magnitude earthquake occurred at 18.948°N 145.079°E in the Pagan region of the Northern Mariana Islands. Currently, there are no tsunami warnings or advisories issued by the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center. For more information, contact the CNMI EOC State Warning Point at (670)-237-8000. (PR)

Happy New Year



Shirley's COFFEE SHOP
Home of the Best Fried Rice

'Despite minor setbacks, MSA plans for 2023 still a go'

By **CHRYSTAL MARINO**
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CORRESPONDENT

Since opening in August last year, Marianas Southern Airways continues to seek to expand and develop the airline in 2023 as well as meet the flight needs that arise and, despite some minor setbacks that have delayed some of their plans, they still intend to press ahead with those plans.

MSA president Keith Stewart and vice president William Giles both agreed that flights to Rota and Guam from Saipan, as well as flight from Guam to Saipan, have been doing extremely well and only the Tinian route has been the less travelled through Marianas Southern Airways.

Stewart said this past year hasn't seen any major setbacks for the company and that the only challenges they faced was getting the pilot training program approved in the United States, which took longer than expected, and affected their plans of bringing in more flights than originally expected.

The uptick in the number of flights that they were planning was slowed down by three and a half months, he said, and although it may have not moved at a speed that they've initially anticipated and not everything planned has worked through, they are still moving forward.

When asked if they would consider creating an island hop route, Stewart stated that the MSA flights route for now will be focused on the Mariana islands and they are seeking to extend flights to the Northern Islands, mainly Pagan.



One of Marianas Southern Airways' airlines.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

As for an island hop route throughout Micronesia, Stewart said they are interested and considering doing that but doing so under its sister company, the Northern Marianas Airways, which would be where the jets are, because they can't use the smaller planes they're using for flights within the Marianas.

He says it is still a considerable amount of time down the road. "We are interested, and we are going to be considering that but that's down the road a little bit. We want to get Northern Marianas Airways up and rolling with starting service to Australia, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, and then start looking at other destinations from there," Stewart stated.

He also shot down talk that their inter-Marianas flights require MSA planes to be pressurized. He said it is not true that MSA planes fly up to 25,000 feet. "They don't. We just need to fly over generally 5,000 to 10,000 [feet]. So, the flights are almost like an island tour than going up high, but there's somebody spreading rumors around that we can't be profitable because our planes are pressurized and we have to go up to 25,000 feet and then back down, which is not the case whatsoever," Stewart said. "Actually... even if I didn't have ownership in it, I love flying these much more than other options, because it's just beautiful, especially on a sunny day, just

going over the islands all the way down to Guam."

When discussing what the public can look forward to from MSA in 2023, Stewart shared that they are seeking to increase the number of flights and aircraft and start building the airline to service more where the need is. With 2022 focused on getting the airline started, he said that in 2023 they would build off of the things accomplished in 2022 and add on and expand more services.

"We are projecting right now to start adding more flights by Jan. 20," Stewart explained, including making connections for United Airlines for Honolulu flights.

Giles also mentioned the

possibility of adding some additional flight to Tinian, additional flights to Rota, and opening up soon thereafter a Rota-Guam, Guam-Rota flight.

Giles said that that, as soon as they can situate how and if the U.S. Customs and Border Protection can man the flights permanently, they see the routes from Guam-Rota and Tinian-Guam opening up. Currently there are 42 flights taking place weekly, with the highest demand for Saipan to Guam and Saipan to Rota routes.


When discussing the highly anticipated Northern Marianas Airways, Stewart revealed that, along with partners, NMA is seeking to bring in the

larger jets, and are now seeking approval to be able to start services internationally.


"It is a huge opportunity for the CNMI to be able to have our home-based airplanes, based out of the CNMI—757 jets that will open up the CNMI and have this be a hub and so we are very close to be able to get that launched. We just need various support from the government and community etc. to be able to get this thing going. And we can't just come and bring aircrafts and then hope everything comes together. We really need the entire community, and we'd love for the entire community to get behind it, because it'll be transformational," Stewart said.

He mentioned they just need a couple of months for destination marketing, but they are continuing to work forward to get the international flights going.

Stewart and Giles also expressed their appreciation to the community "We want to thank the community for the support. We know that, as we've gotten started up, it hasn't gone how we have envisioned it going. ...As with any business that's just starting we run through challenges, but we really appreciate all the support we have from the community. We're doing everything we can to go and just increase service, continually to improve. Even the staff, the local staff that has become MSA, has been tremendous...so thanks to the community, our staff and employee who have come on board with us."




Northern Marianas Technical Institute
P.O. Box 504880 Saipan MP 96950
Tel. No.: (670) 235-6684




Northern Marianas Technical Institute
Board of Trustees Regular Meeting
Friday, January 06, 2023
10:00 a.m., NMTech Lower Base Campus

AGENDA

- I. Call to Order
- II. Adoption of Agenda
- III. Adoption of Meeting Minutes
 - a. December 05, 2022
- IV. Public Comments
- V. Unfinished Business
 - a. NMTech By-Laws
 - b. HR Policy
 - c. Student Policy
 - d. Nomination Committee
- VI. New Business
 - a. Financial Report
 - b. Updated Bank Account Signatories
- VII. Committee Updates
 - a. Finance
 - b. Personnel
 - c. Programs
 - d. Foundation
- VIII. Executive Session
- IX. Announcements
- X. Adjournment



COMMONWEALTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (CEDA)
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Website: www.developcnmi.com



PUBLIC NOTICE

Wednesday, January 4, 2023


PURSUANT TO PUBLIC LAW 8-41, THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE COMMONWEALTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (CEDA) THRU ITS CHAIRWOMAN, HEREBY INFORMS THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT THE CEDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS WILL HOLD A SPECIAL MEETING ON FRIDAY, JANUARY 6, 2023 AT 2:00 P.M. THE MEETING WILL BE HELD AT THE CEDA CONFERENCE ROOM, FIRST FLOOR, CEDA BUILDING, BEACH ROAD, OLEAI SAIPAN. THE AGENDA FOR THIS MEETING IS AS FOLLOWS:

AGENDA

- I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
 - A. Call to Order
 - B. Roll Call
 - C. Adoption of Agenda
 - D. Election of Officers
- II. PUBLIC COMMENTS
- III. BOARD DELIBERATION & ACTION ON CEDA FORECLOSED PROPERTIES
- IV. OTHER MATTERS RELATED TO THE ITEMS ABOVE
- V. EXECUTIVE SESSION
- VI. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items. (Note: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a)(7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session.)

/s/ AUBRY M. HOCOG
Chairwoman



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality
Division of Coastal Resources Management
P.O. Box 501304, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 664-8300; Fax: (670) 664-8315
www.dcrm.gov.mp



PUBLIC NOTICE

From the COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS COASTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM of the DIVISION OF COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

DATE: December 23, 2022

NOTICE: The Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality (BECQ) Division of Coastal Resources Management (DCRM) is pleased to announce an Eco-Tour Operator Best Practices Course focused on tour and marine sports operators (MSOs). The course is tentatively scheduled to begin in January 2023. To register or view more information about the course, visit the DCRM website at: <https://dcrm.gov.mp/current-projects/eco-tour-operator-best-practices-certification-program/>.

The Eco-Tour Operator Best Practices Course (ECO-TO-BP) is a free course that educates and certifies MSOs on ways they could minimize their impact to beaches, water quality, and wildlife. The topics covered are Pollution, Health, and Safety; Corals and Marine Environment; and Rules and Regulations. The course and certification exam would take a total of eight hours to complete.

Registration is required and the schedule of sessions will be dependent on the availability of registrants for calendar year 2023 – 2024. If MSOs successfully complete the course and pass the certification exam, they become eligible for a 25% discount on their next watersports permit. The first class offering will be held on Wednesday, January 18, 2023.

DCRM encourages all MSOs to take advantage of this learning opportunity. Contact DCRM's Permitting Section or Planning Section with any questions or comments regarding the course, certification, or discount through 1 (670) 664-8300/24 or planning@dcrm.gov.mp or planning@dcrm.gov.mp.

\$100K bail set for two accused of possessing 'ice'

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Superior Court has imposed a \$100,000 cash bail on two individual who were accused of possession of methamphetamine or "ice" after they were allegedly caught with the substance following a traffic stop.

Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph Camacho imposed separate \$100,000 cash bails on Qiu Kemmy Encha, 38, and Morell Bayani Esteves, 47, after they were allegedly

caught in possession of "ice" following a traffic stop last week.

The co-defendants are each facing one charge of possession of a controlled substance.

Following their bail hearing, both defendants were remanded back to Department of Corrections custody and were ordered to return to court for a preliminary hearing today, Jan. 4, at 10am. Meanwhile, their arraignment is set for Jan. 9 at 9am.

According to court documents, on the afternoon of Nov. 2, 2022, a

patrol police officer traveling south on Texas Road, Susupe observed a maroon sedan traveling north with its window rolled halfway.

Police noted that the female driver, later identified as Qui, was not wearing a seatbelt, prompting the officers to make a U-turn in pursuit of the sedan to conduct a violator stop.

Upon approaching the vehicle, the police officer saw Qui with a male, later identified as Esteves, seated in the front passenger seat.

The officer told the driver why

she was pulled over, and asked her to present her driver's license, vehicle registration and insurance documents.

As the police officer was speaking to Qui, he said he noticed a small, clear Ziploc bag on the driver side that contained a cut straw and a crystalline substance inside it.

When police asked about the contents of the Ziploc bag, Qiu said, "Asiga," the Chamorro word for salt

and denied that it belonged to her. The substance later tested positive for methamphetamine through a field narcotics identification kit.

At the booking section of the Department of Corrections, Esteves was searched by Corrections officers who found two clear Ziploc bags containing a crystalline substance hidden in his cellphone case. The contents also tested positive for methamphetamine.



THIRD AUCTION

BJ EDDY

The third auctions to raise money to satisfy the outstanding court judgments against Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC is set to close this Friday, Jan. 6, 2023, focusing on the sale of casino chips and roulette wheels, and more. The auction, to take place as a closed bid, will include almost the entire chip inventory of the casino. File photo shows IPI's Imperial Palace-Saipan in Garapan in a drone file footage taken by BJ Eddy. Check out his YouTube channel at <https://youtu.be/bhMPCVsaEzM>.

BOOST

From Page 1

records of BOOST disbursements, testimonies, and will ultimately forward the case to the proper enforcement agency.

"I can't begin to understand why this all happened. This matter will be referred to proper authorities," she said.

The joint committee—composed of the Ways and Means Committee and the Judiciary and Governmental Operations Committee—mentioned that there will also be an upcoming review of the program by the U.S Inspector General.

Before the conclusion of the proceedings, committee member Rep. Joel Camacho (R-Saipan) stated that this program was something that could have greatly benefitted the CNMI community.

"That was over \$15 million of ARPA money that could have even

been converted to a stimulus and distributed to our people. I just want to apologize and empathize with all those businesses out there who were honest and diligent in submitting their BOOST packets, only to be sidelined. Hopefully there will be future opportunities for you all that is fair and well put together. To all the BOOST awardees, congratulations but I would highly recommend that you stick to the intended purpose of the funds given. There is so much uncertainty with forthcoming audits and reviews by the Inspector General," he said.

Meanwhile, Rep. Leila Staffler (D-Saipan) wants the committee to call in more witnesses, including contractors who were paid through BOOST funds, including Shayne Villanueva, Rob Travilla, Salina Sap, Frank Camacho, Perry Inos Jr., owners of Creatures, Ned Pablo, Joe Mesa, James Petite, and Jesse Ogo.

"I would like to request that the committee consider bringing in these

individuals for more clarity on this program," she said.

Rep. Tina Sablan (D-Saipan) echoed Staffler's sentiment adding that she still hopes that the committee will call former Finance secretary David Atalig to testify on his involvement. "He isn't off the hook and he certainly still has a lot of questions to answer," she said.

Vice speaker Rep. BJ Attao (Ind-Saipan) said that because of how the BOOST program was ran, the CNMI has been put in a position that could potentially ruin its standing in terms of federal assistance.

"The way the program was ran, it puts the CNMI in a really bad position when it comes to future federal programs. The Inspector General and auditors will be here very soon. The CNMI was given over \$2 billion to assist with disasters and the pandemic. But the way we've been utilizing these funds, its questionable. This doesn't look good for the CNMI," he said.

Fortunately, Palacios said, he has reviewed a number of the employment positions created under ARPA, and a lot of them could make a difference in the CNMI, especially in its journey to recovery.

Meanwhile, the Transition Committee is in the process of finalizing its reports on over 30 government agencies within the CNMI.

Palacios and Apatang are expected to review these reports sometime this week before their inauguration on Jan. 9.



SCS WINNER

DONNA LIWAG RIVERA

The winner of the Samsung Galaxy A7 10.4" tablet is the MMB Maturana House of Prayer, with a representative posing with Saipan Computer Services staff Mary Grace Delos Santos during the 10th Customer Appreciation Raffle Promotion held on New Year's Eve last Saturday at the SCS store on Beach Road.

CLERK

From Page 1

Robert Mang has filed a lawsuit against his former employer with the Superior Court, alleging that even after months since his contract with the court expired, his employer was still spying and monitoring him through his computer.

According to Mang's lawsuit, the general scheme allegedly involves extensive spying against him by his employer.

"It started as work-from-home monitoring in or about June 2021 and is still ongoing despite my clerkship concluding in October 2021. The CNMI overlooked the need to disclose the lack of expectation of privacy in their personal manual, my contract, or on the laptop itself. They gained access to my internet in Maryland by duping my elderly parents into joining the scheme," Mang said.

Mang alleges that the Superior Court has mostly used the spying to contact 22 other judges he interviewed with during and after his clerkship.

"I can only speculate about their motives, but it appears the Superior Court is offended that I overlooked disclosing that I had failed the bar exam to Presiding Judge Naraja and by my desire to cut the clerkship short. It is difficult to even speculate about why they continued for so long

or why they would believe that to be a lawful means of redressing their issues with me," he said.

As relief, Mang wants the court to award him actual damages, general damages, statutory damages, punitive damages, treble damages, and other relief the court finds appropriate.

In addition, the plaintiff seeks compensatory damages for his injuries, including, but not limited to, a breach of fiduciary duties, mental agony, pain and suffering, loss of enjoyment of life, continued emotional distress, medical care, lost earnings, and diminished future earnings in an amount to be proven at trial.

Mang also seeks non-economic damages for lost wages, pain and suffering, mental agony, loss of enjoyment of life and diminished future earnings in an amount to be proven at trial.

Lastly, the plaintiff seeks punitive damages, in an amount to be proven at trial, for the court's bad faith, intentional or negligent infliction of emotional distress, breach of contract, and displaying actual malice while acting recklessly.

"Defendant acted with malice, because his actions demonstrated that the defendant had mischief in his heart, with culpable recklessness and a willful and wanton disregard for the effect his actions would have on the plaintiff. He did not care if the plaintiff were harmed by his actions," the suit stated.

ARPA

From Page 1

ed them to not return after Dec. 31, 2022," he said.

John Reyes, overall chairman of both Transition and Inauguration committees, stated that, at this time, the committee has no word on what will happen to these personnel and their positions.

"At this time, we really don't know the status of the ARPA funding so we

can't commit to what happens after the expiration of their contracts," he said.

In a press briefing last November 2022, Palacios said that "irrelevant" jobs created under ARPA—which poured millions of dollars into the CNMI—will soon cease to exist once he takes office in accordance with their campaign pledge "to make a difference."

However, jobs and positions that have or will make a difference for the CNMI in the future may be extended past the Dec. 30 expiration date.

\$20K bail set for man accused of credit card fraud

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Superior Court has imposed a \$20,000 cash bail on a man accused of using another individual's credit card to rack up over \$6,000 worth of unauthorized purchases.

Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph Camacho recently imposed a \$20,000 cash bail on Steven Roman Tudela,

who was arrested last week after he was tagged by a local business of allegedly using a stolen credit card to make unauthorized purchases.

Tudela, 28, is facing charges of theft and misuse of a financial instrument after making unauthorized transactions in the total amount of \$6,990.85 starting in October 2022 on a credit card that was reported missing.

After the hearing, Tudela was

remanded to the custody of the Department of Corrections and was ordered to return to court for a preliminary hearing on Jan. 4 at 10am. He will be arraigned on Jan. 9 at 10am.

According to the police report, a man told his wife last Oct. 9, 2022, that his wallet was missing after a visit to his mother's residence. The couple looked everywhere but they could not find the wallet

and thought it was misplaced.

They then went on a family vacation to Japan and returned to Saipan on Oct. 15, 2022. At this time, the wife resumed her search for her husband's wallet, which contained three bank cards, two credit cards, and cash amounting to \$1,000. Unfortunately, they still could not find the wallet.

Later, the wife said that when she checked online, she found

multiple transactions on one of the credit cards on Saipan while they were still in Japan.

She told police that they hired a private investigator who obtained footage from a surveillance camera of a store where one of the credit cards was used.

The footage showed a man, later identified as Tudela. The couple told police that they knew Tudela.

The husband told police that

Tudela, who is his brother's stepson, was not authorized to use his credit card to purchase anything. He said it was not the first time Tudela stole from him.

Police said they are also investigating other unauthorized transactions made by Tudela at other business establishments between November and December 2022.

According to police reports, Tudela used the stolen credit card at multiple gas stations, jewelry shops, multiple restaurants, electronic shops, supermarkets, and multiple gift shops.

Advanced dementia care training at UOG this Jan.

The University of Guam's Guam/Micronesia Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program is offering an opportunity for caregivers of persons with dementia to participate in an online training and certification program called CARES Dementia Advanced Care.

This award-winning program has six modules: (1) Making a Connection with the Person; (2) Eating Well; (3) Recognizing Pain; (4) Minimizing Falls; (5) Rethinking Wandering; and (6) Minimizing and Eliminating Restraints. Participants who complete all six modules will receive a certificate of completion and will be eligible for CARES Dementia Certification.

The training schedule is outlined below.

■ **Module 1 – Making a Connection with the Person:** 6pm – 8pm, Wednesday, Jan. 4

■ **Module 2 – Eating Well:** 10am – 12pm, Saturday, Jan. 7

■ **Module 3 – Recognizing Pain:** 6pm – 8pm Wednesday, Jan. 11

■ **Module 4 – Minimizing Falls:** 10am – 12pm, Saturday, Jan. 14

■ **Module 5 – Rethinking Wandering:** 6pm – 8pm Wednesday, Jan. 18

■ **Module 6 – Minimizing and Eliminating Restraints:** 10am – 12pm, Saturday, Jan. 21

The CARES Dementia Advanced Care certification

exam will be at:

■ **6pm – 8pm, Wednesday, Jan. 25**

■ **10am – 12pm, Saturday, Jan. 28**

Participants can attend the Wednesday or Saturday sessions using the following Zoom links:

■ **Wednesday sessions:** <https://zoom.us/j/92072878067>

■ **Saturday sessions:** <https://zoom.us/j/91243370958>

Ongoing dementia support groups

The training program is part of the ongoing online support groups for family caregivers of persons with dementia being conducted by the Guam/Micronesia Geriatrics Workforce

Enhancement Program of the UOG School of Health. The support group sessions are held on Zoom every Wednesday evening and Saturday morning year-round. The sessions are free of charge to partners, family members, and other caregivers of persons with dementia who have ties to Guam and the Micronesian region.

For more information, contact:

Dr. Iain Twaddle or Nikolas Gutierrez

Guam/Micronesia Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program

Telehealth Geriatric Support Services

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This project is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as part of an award totaling \$749,313. (**UOG**)

ARMATECH

CCTV Installer and Repairer

Tel: (670) 234-8895 | Email: armatech.saipan@gmail.com
Mobile: (670) 287-5525 / (670) 783-8895

Rough seas, dangerous jellyfish seen until Wednesday afternoon

The public is being warned about the presence of Indo-Pacific man-o-war jellyfish in all beaches and surf zones of the Marianas through Wednesday afternoon. Also, a small craft advisory remains in effect until 6pm Wednesday.

Based on the information received from the National Weather Service in Guam and compiled at the CNMI Emergency Operations Center State Warning Point, dangerous rip currents are also present along east facing reefs through Wednesday afternoon.

Rip currents can sweep even the best swimmers away from shore into deeper water.

Contact with Indo-Pacific man-o-war, alive or dead, can cause extreme pain and may be fatal in some cases.

An elevated trade swell will keep the rip current risk high along east facing reefs through at least Wednesday afternoon. Man-o-war have been reported washed up on north facing beaches in Guam, including Tarague Beach. Man-o-war may still be found on beaches and the waters of the Marianas.

Remain out of the water to avoid hazardous swimming conditions. Avoid making contact with men-o-war that


have washed up on beaches, especially when bubbles can be seen.

The public is advised to stay out of the water along all reef lines. Swim near a lifeguard. If caught in a rip current, relax and float. Don't swim against the current. If able, swim in a direction following the shoreline. If unable to escape, face the shore and call or wave for help. Even if men-o-war are not found along the beach, they could still be out in the water.

The public is being warned of east to northeast winds of 15 to 20 knots with frequent gust of up to 25 knots in Marianas coastal waters until 6pm Wednesday. Conditions will be hazardous to small craft.

Winds will remain elevated and hazardous to small craft across all of the Marianas, but may briefly drop below criteria level Tuesday night. Seas may occasionally reach hazardous levels near showers.

A small craft advisory means that wind speeds of 21 to 33 knots are expected to produce wave conditions hazardous to small craft. Inexperienced mariners, especially those operating smaller vessels, should avoid boating in hazardous conditions. (**PR**)



COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

REQUEST FOR ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING SERVICES
CUC-RAESP-23-004

A&E Design Services for Tinian Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) and Collection System & Rota Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) and Collection System Preliminary Engineering Report

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified Architectural and Engineering (A&E) firms for Preliminary Engineering Reports (PER) for a Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) and Collection System on Tinian and Rota. The services shall include preparation of the PER as per USDA RUS Bulletin 1780-2.

This project is funded by a grant from the United States Office of Insular Affairs, U.S. Department of Interior.

Prospective Proposers for this project must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division via email to marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org. The RAESP package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office via email after registration.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies of the Proposal and One (1) original and five (5) hard copies of the Cost Proposal in a separate envelope must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-RAESP-23-004, A&E Services for Tinian Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) and Collection System & Rota Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) and Collection System – Preliminary Engineering Report"**, to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 a.m., (ChST) on January 18, 2023. Late submissions and conditional proposals will not be considered.**

Discussions may be conducted with responsible proposers who submit proposal determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. All proposers shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity for discussion. During discussions, there will be no disclosure of any information derived from the proposal submitted by competing proposers.

All proposers are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the proposers due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Consultant's preparation of a proposal under the contract. The RAESP does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the statement of qualifications under this request, or to procure or contract for services. Consultants are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This RAESP and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on December 28, 2022** to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email – manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Ms. Nicolette Villagomez, CUC Water/Wastewater Engineer – via email, nicolette.villagomez@cucgov.org; Larry Manacop, CUC Acting Chief Engineer at email larry.manacop@cucgov.org and Marcela Tenorio, Administrative Technician Senior – via email marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and waive any imperfection in the proposal in the best interest of the government. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

MICHAEL A. WHITE, ESQ., F0122
THE LAW OFFICES OF MICHAEL A. WHITE, LLC
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ATTORNEY FOR Plaintiff

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT
OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS**

**NORTHERN
MARIANAS HOUSING,
Plaintiff,
-v-
RAMON S. DELA CRUZ
and REBECCA C.
DELA CRUZ,
Defendants.**

NOTICE OF SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to an Order issued by the Court in this matter on October 14, 2022, I will sell, at public auction, to the highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all of the right, title, and interest of Defendant in and to the following property:

Legal description of the property:

Lot no. 001 G 74, containing an area of 729 square meters, more or less, as more particularly described on Drawing/Cadastral Plat no. 001 G 03, the original of which was recorded 20 March 1986 as Document no. 86-0510 at the Commonwealth Recorder's Office, Saipan.

Total area of the property:
729 square meters

Known encumbrances:

A mortgage in favor of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation.

Date, Time, and Places of Sale. The sale will be held on Friday, January 27, 2023, at the hour of 1:30 p.m., at The Law Offices of Michael A. White, LLC, Joeten Center, Susupe, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. The sale will be open to the general public. A copy of the title insurance report for the property is available to any prospective bidder upon request. A copy of the mortgage in favor of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, a plat map showing the boundaries of the above-described property, a map of the property's location in Saipan, a copy of this Notice, and a copy of the Court's Order of October 14, 2022, are available for inspection and copying at the offices of the undersigned. Prospective bidders can view and inspect the property at any time during normal business hours. The sale may be postponed by the undersigned at any time.

Terms of Conditions of the Sale. The Terms and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the undersigned, either prior to or at the sale. These terms and conditions shall govern the conduct of the sale.

Additional Terms and Conditions. A deposit of 10% of the successful bid is payable to the undersigned by the close of business of the date of sale, and the balance of the successful bid is to be paid within three (3) working days thereafter. The purchase price will be held in escrow pending approval of the sale by the Court. The sale is subject to the Court's approval. Upon approval by the Court, a Certificate of Sale will be issued to the successful purchaser upon satisfying the terms of payment. The sale is also subject to statutory redemption rights for 12 months following the date of sale. If the property is not redeemed during the redemption period, a Quitclaim Deed will issue, conveying title to the purchaser.

DATED, this 9th day of December, 2022.

/s/
MICHAEL A. WHITE, Auctioneer

FOLLOWING FATALITY IN GUAM

USDOL urges employers to enhance workplace safety measures, protect workers from hazards

OSHA to conduct inspections at ports, construction sites and locations where cranes are used

DEDEDO, Guam—The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration is urging employers in Guam, American Samoa, and the Northern Mariana Islands to enhance safety measures to protect workers against crane

hazards following a Nov. 25, 2022 crane-related death at the Port Authority of Guam. The incident is currently under investigation.

The most common crane hazards leading to serious injuries and fatalities include crane tip-overs, being struck by a crane, electrocutions, being caught in between a crane and other equipment or objects, falls from the equipment and unqualified operators.

In workplaces where cranes are operating, OSHA recommends the following safety measures:

- Use your experience, knowledge and training to assess risks and follow crane procedures.

- Do not operate a crane or hoist that is damaged or has any actual or suspected mechanical or electrical malfunction.

- Do not attempt to lengthen wire rope or repair damaged wire rope.

- Do not use the wire rope, any part of the crane, hoist, or the load block and hook as a ground for welding.

- Do not allow a welding electrode to touch the wire rope.

- Do not remove or obscure any warning labels on the crane or hoist.

- Do not walk under a suspended load or allow anyone to walk under a suspended load.

- Do not perform or allow anyone to perform any work on a suspended load that requires a worker to be positioned under the suspended load.

- Always use personal protective equipment, such as gloves, hard hats, hearing, foot and eye protection.

"Injuries and fatalities related to crane operations are preventable with adequate workplace training and proper attention to safety

controls," said OSHA area director Roger Forstner in Honolulu. "Employers need to take all necessary steps to reduce incidents involving crane operations and improve the workplace safety where cranes are in use."

As part of this crane safety initiative, OSHA compliance officers will conduct inspections at ports, construction sites and other locations where cranes are in use. The agency will also conduct outreach activities, on-site consultations and promote partnerships and alliances to improve compliance and prevent injuries and fatalities.

In 2021, 5,190 workers suffered fatal work injuries according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics in its 2021 Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries report.

Learn more about OSHA requirements for cranes and derricks in construction. (*USDOL*)

Families complete food and nutrition program at CHCC's Family to Family Health Info Center



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Thirteen families recently completed a nutrition education program at the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.'s Family to Family Health Information Center.

Thirteen families recently completed a nutrition education program at the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.'s Family to Family Health Information Center. The program was made possible through a partnership between CHCC's Public Health Services and the Northern Marianas College's Expanded Food & Nutrition Program. The nutrition education sessions were facilitated by EFNEP staff members and included nine lessons focused on making healthy food choices, preparing healthy and delicious meals, and making smart choices when purchasing

food products and produce. Each lesson provided hands-on activities, group discussions, and an opportunity for each participant to share feedback and apply newly learned skills. Families were provided enhancements or prizes related to nutrition or healthy meals as part of the program.

The Family-to-Family Health Information Center, or F2F HIC, is a program under CHCC Public Health Services which serves families who have children and youth with special health care needs. The F2F HIC offers families support by helping them navigate and access available community resources that are critical

for the health and development of their children.

Other services provided by the F2F HIC include:

- Training for Parent Leaders

- Learning sessions for parent/caregivers and professionals on a variety of health topics and

- related areas

- Information and support in accessing community resources; referral assistance

- Peer to peer support

- Computer and printer (for accessing information, application forms, etc.)

- Books and resources to support understanding of different kinds of disabilities

- Transportation services to medical or healthcare related services

For more information on the Family-to-Family Health Information Center, please call (670)664-8700 or email us at f2fhic@chcc.health

For more information about CHCC programs, follow @cnmichcc on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter; visit <https://www.chcc.health>; or call (670) 234-8950.

For more information about CHCC programs, follow @cnmichcc on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter; visit <https://www.chcc.health>; or call (670) 234-8950. (*PR*)

UOG publication: 1 diagnosed with cancer every day in Guam

The Guam Cancer Registry under the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at the University of Guam, the Guam Comprehensive Cancer Control Coalition, and the Department of Public Health and Social Services announce the publication of the latest edition of the *Guam Cancer Facts and Figures*.

This newest publication covers 2013-2017 and is the most updated aggregated cancer data available from the Guam Cancer Registry. Work on the next five-year report begins in about a year.

Based on the 2013-2017 data:

- On average, one person is diagnosed with cancer every day in Guam based on an age-adjusted rate for every 100,000 people.

- One resident dies of cancer every 2.3 days in Guam.

- Most cancer deaths are from lung, colorectal, liver and breast, as these account for more than half of all cancer deaths.

- Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death among males and females.

- Males account for a higher number of new cases and deaths than females.

- About 1.5% of new cancer cases were diagnosed in persons 0-24 years of age and 43% of new cases were diagnosed in persons with ages 65 years and older.

- Data from 2013-2017 suggest that new cancer cases declined 13.9% compared with the prior five-year period, but this may be due in part to a change in data reporting. Only invasive cases were included in 2013-2017.

- Cancer of the lung and bronchus was the leading cause of cancer deaths in males and females. Cigarette smoking, exposure to secondhand smoke, radiation exposure, and occupational exposure to smoking are among the risk factors associated with lung cancer.

- By ethnicity, Micronesians—defined as people from the Federated States of Micronesia, Palau and the Marshall Islands—had the highest cancer incidence rates (438) compared to 280 overall in Guam. Their rates for liver cancer incidence were nearly five times higher than those in the United States and three times higher than Guam's overall.

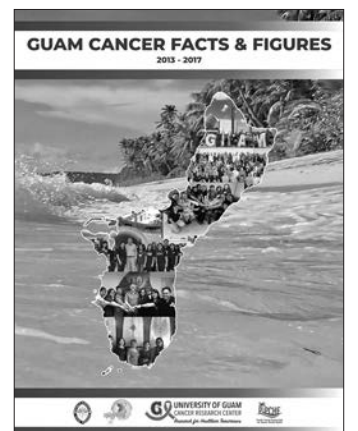
- CHamorus had the highest age-adjusted incidence rates in cancers of the nasopharynx (the upper part of the throat that starts at the back of the nasal cavity), esophagus, urinary bladder, and leukemia.

Cancer was the second-highest leading cause of death in Guam next to cardiovascular diseases.

"We have sufficient data to

examine trends and to determine which areas in cancer prevention and control stand out as service and resource priorities. By translating these data into action through policies and programs, we hope to reverse the growing burden of cancer in Guam," according to a joint message from Rachael Leon Guerrero, vice provost for Research and Sponsored Programs at UOG and director of the Guam Cancer Registry; and the late Margaret Hattori-Uchima, dean of the School of Health who passed away on Dec. 26, 2022.

Dr. Delores Lee, the lead



author of the publication, said screening saves lives.

"I have seen it help detect cancer early—when it's treatable," Lee said.

The publication was funded by the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs and Department of Public Health and Social Services through the National Cancer Institute of the National Institutes of Health and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The Guam Cancer Registry was established in 1998 by Public Law 24-198 to collect and abstract cancer data from all health-care providers and non-medical sources within its jurisdiction.

The Guam Cancer Registry would like to extend its sincere appreciation and gratitude to all the facilities and organizations who provided information for data sharing and analysis. Without their support, reports like Facts and Figures would not be possible.

A copy of the 2013-2017 Guam Cancer Facts and Figures is at https://www.uog.edu/_resources/files/research/gcr/reports/2013-2017GuamCancerFactsFigures.pdf

For additional information of UOG Guam Cancer Registry:

- Visit <https://www.uog.edu/research/guam-cancer-registry>

- Contact Renata Bordallo, Research Associate II, Data Collection Specialist, Guam Cancer Registry, Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at UOG (671) 735-2988/0129 or renatab@triton.uog.edu. (*PR*)

Magazine names 2022 Executive of the Year nominees



Hermosa



Cruz



Hau



Yanagisawa



Hutapea



Shimizu



Hazzard

BARRIGADA, Guam—*Guam Business Magazine* is pleased to announce the nominees for the 2022 *Guam Business Magazine* Executive of the Year.

The nominees are:

■ Frank Cruz, vice president and general manager of Guam Fast Foods Inc., which does business as KFC Guam and Sbarro Guam;

■ Jimmy T.C. Hau, president, Mobil Oil Guam Inc., president, Mobil Oil Mariana Islands Inc. and president, Mobil Oil Micronesia Inc.;

■ Charles B. Hazzard III, president, CEO and project director, DZSP 21;

■ Charlie Hermosa, general manager, Guam-Micronesia, APL; president, Bella Wings Aviation; and president, Hermosa Ventures LLC, which does business as

Guam Gift Baskets;

■ Siska S. Hutapea, founder and president of Cornerstone Valuation Guam Inc.;

■ Thomas G. Shimizu, general manager, Ambros Inc.; and

■ Ken Yanagisawa, general manager, the Tsubaki Tower, president/director, PHR Management Inc.; managing director, Ken Real Estate Lease Ltd.

The Executive of the Year will be revealed at the Feb. 11, 2023, Executive of the Year Gala at the Hyatt Regency Guam, together with the release of the January-February 2023 issue of *Guam Business Magazine*, which will feature the awardee on the cover.

Since 1983, the title of Executive of the Year has been awarded annually (except in 2021 for 2020), recognizing executives who have made

outstanding contributions to the business communities of Micronesia, have raised the bar in their fields and are considerably involved in the community.

The 2023 Gala will mark the 40th anniversary of the *Guam Business Magazine* Executive of the Year program.

Past Executive of the Year recipients include **Robert H. Jones** of Triple J Enterprises Inc. (1983); **John M. Borlas** of IT&E Overseas Inc. (1984); **Philip J. Flores** of BankPacific (1985); **Doris Flores Brooks** of the Office of Public Accountability (1986); **Mark V. Pangilinan** of M.V. Pangilinan Enterprises Inc. (1987); **Allen A. Pickens** of Tax-Aide (1988); the late **T. Roy Sullivan** of Jones & Guerrero Co. (1989); **Kurt S. Moylan** of Moylan's Insurance (1990); the late **Akira "Mike" Baba**

of Baba Corp. (1991); **Paul M. Calvo** of Calvo Enterprises Inc. (1992); **Antoinette D. Sanford** of Sanford Technology Group (1993); the late **Kenneth T. Jones** of Jones & Guerrero Co. (1994); the late **Edward M. Calvo** of Calvo Enterprises Inc. (1995); **L. Carl Peterson** of Money Resources Inc. (1996); **William R. Thompson** (1997) of Atkins Kroll Inc.; the late **John K. Lee** of First Hawaiian Bank (1998); the late **Henry L. Schnabel** of Calvo's Insurance Underwriters (1999); **Marian Aldan-Pierce** of DFS Saipan (2000); **Manfred H. Pieper** of Voyages Indigenous Tourism Australia (2001); **Thomas G. Ahillen** of Asia Pacific Solutions LLC (2002); **Juan T. Guerrero** of Herman's Modern Bakery Inc. (2003); **Joseph M. Crisosto-**

mo of Cars Plus LLC, Cycles Plus and Payless Car Rental (2004); **Joseph "Jerry" Kramer** of Pacific International Inc. (2004); **David M. Sablan** of Century Group of Companies (2005); the late **Alfred C. Ysrael** of Tanota Partners (2006); **Lee P. Webber** of MDA Guam (2007); **Laura-Lynn V. Dacanay** of First Hawaiian Bank (2008); **Jerry Cho Yee Tan** of Tan Holdings Inc. (2009); **Lourdes A. "Lou" Leon Guerrero** of Bank of Guam (2010); **Jay R. Shedd** of IT&E (2011); **Jerrold C. Johnson** of Hawaiian Rock Products (2012); **George Chiu** of Tan Holdings (2013); **Norman T. Tenorio** of Joeten Enterprises Inc., Pacifica Insurance Underwriters Inc., Tropical Instant Press Inc., Saipan Shipping Co., Saipan Stevedore and

Advance Carrier (2014); **Jeffrey B. Jones** of Triple J Enterprises Inc. (2015); **Jose C. "Joe" Ayuyu** of McDonald's of Guam and Saipan, RJ Corp. and RJ Guam LLC (2016); **Leonard K. Kaa Sr.**, senior vice president and general manager, Black Construction Corp. (2017); **Bernadette N. Valencia** of Matson Navigation Inc. (2018); **AnneMarie T. Muna**, president and general manager of AM Insurance (2019) and **Edward G. Untalan**, executive vice president and Guam-Northern Marianas region manager of First Hawaiian Bank (2021).

For additional information or inquiries, contact Maureen N. Maratita, publisher of *Guam Business Magazine* at publisher@glimpsesofguam.com or on (1-671) 687-2505. (*Guam Business Magazine*)

USCGC Oliver Henry 2022 New Year's Eve log entry

There is an old naval tradition in which New Year's Eve mid-watch logs on U.S. naval vessels are written in verse. No one is quite sure when this tradition started and participation varies. The oldest mid-watch poem to be located to date is from USS *Idaho* in 1926. This year our USCGC *Oliver Henry* (WPC 1140)

crew, currently the cutter on patrol in western Oceania and first in for response should the need arise, adds their contribution to this legacy courtesy of seaman D.J. Gonzales:

"Consider this: a night on the open sea. Humans scratch and claw to get a taste of its glory and bounty. To both brave its harshness and enjoy

its splendid serenity. But tonight, some of our crew sleep soundly, cradled in the warm arms of a blue lagoon named Tanapag Harbor, Saipan. Many remain up, staring at the sky as fireworks light up the beautiful island.

"Tonight, we ring in the new year with the kind words of our protector, our vessel,



USCGC *Oliver Henry* (WPC 1140) on patrol off Saipan on Dec. 31, 2022. *Oliver Henry* currently the cutter on patrol in western Oceania and first in for response should the need arise, adds their contribution to this legacy. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by SNEM Joesph Suttles)



U.S. COAST GUARD FORCES MICRONESIA

USCGC *Oliver Henry* (WPC 1140) moored in Saipan on Dec. 31, 2022. *Oliver Henry* currently the cutter on patrol in western Oceania and first in for response should the need arise, adds their contribution to this legacy. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by SNEM Joesph Suttles)

our muse, good ol' cutter *Oliver Henry*. No one but the man above and the righteous powers that be—USCG Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam—know where. Our hatches battened to the tune of yoke, and our lights, shine true. The cutter sleeps now...as soundly as our small boat, its trusty ward, nestled softly in the notch.

"I sit in silent reverence and reflection on the year

that passed. A year that saw us travel throughout the vast Pacific bringing the ship to new horizons. A year of building relationships, some old and some new, for which we are stronger. A year that tested the constitution of these weathered warriors, whimsical poets, and staunch leaders who reside aboard. Lesser men and women may have faltered in the face of this, at times, arduous jour-

ney, but with apt fortitude, we still stand.

"Tonight, I am proud to hold my post in their stead. Tonight, I am their representative. Some call me Dylun Jai. Some call me Gonzo, but tonight, I am no more than a humble sentry accompanying our intrepid vessel through the starry dead of night and into the new year." (*U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam*)

Opinion

Hafa Adai! Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

More stolen Christmases than the Grinch: Lessons from the great Southwest Airlines meltdown

The airline with the ticker LUV, now a far cry from its early customers-first days under co-founder Herb Kelleher, ruined countless holiday reunions over the past week. Southwest Airlines marooned not just passengers but also its own crews and landed tens of thousands of its customers in a Sisyphean holiday-week bog from which there seemed to be no escape to anywhere but the filthy bathroom or the knee-deep bar.

Canceled flights were rescheduled to other canceled flights. Pilots deadheaded to nowhere. Stressed-out travelers searched for overpriced planes, trains and automobiles. Even the airline's shareholders got burned as the reputation-searing meltdown caused the company's stock to fall, the market having deduced Southwest was about to lose much of its pricing power and brand affection.

Chicago was at the epicenter of this mess. Unless you're going to Mexico or Canada or a couple of minor Allegiant frontiers, you're almost certainly flying Southwest out of Midway, whose luggage-strewn floors looked more like a refugee camp this week. Allowing one massive airline to so monopolistically dominate a publicly owned airport, designed to serve the people of northern Illinois, looked like utter folly. No wonder local politicians started making statements.

Sure, there was a very bad storm. But any frequent flyer knows that airlines love to trot out the liability-shielding word "weather" when a more honest reason for a delay is a chronic staff shortage, as was clearly the case in Denver for Southwest; no backup plans; or, in this instance, problems with an archaic, off-the-shelf phone and crew-scheduling system that buckled under pressure even as every other airline quickly got back to normal.

Evidence mounted that Southwest, apparently still stuck in the 1990s, had ignored numerous calls to upgrade its technological support system even after it knew the danger of a meltdown. Rather, it focused on restoring its stock dividend and, reportedly, installing a pickleball court at its headquarters.

As with many businesses in crises, Southwest and its top executives were slow to heed the scale of the problem coming over the net this week: Airline delays on this scale aren't just about missing family gatherings, although that is bad enough, or sitting on the floor for hours. They can be matters of life and death.

This is a public company and a crucial part of the nation's transportation infrastructure that recently enjoyed billions of dollars in federal pandemic bailout funds. In our view, if the Southwest board is doing its job, overpaid heads at the world's largest airline should now roll.

Not all of the reporting on this issue has been accurate.

See AIRLINE on Page 9

MIKE SMITH DIST. BY KING FEATURES SYNDICATE/NAAS
WAVEGARDEN 2022



Fed will cause unnecessary harm

Here are eight predictions for the coming year in accordance with a hallowed tradition that I have previously not honored. If some of the supporting facts below seem unfamiliar, it could be because they have not received the attention they deserve. But they are real.

First, some good news about the U.S. economy:

■ Inflation will likely continue to fall until it becomes obvious that it is no longer a serious concern. Inflation (as measured by the Consumer Price Index) has already fallen precipitously over the last five months; annualized inflation has been 2.5% (July through November), as compared with 11.8% for the preceding five months (February through June). If this looks surprising, it's because the number most reported in the media is for November 2021-November 2022, which is 7.1%. This is true, but not as informative about what's been happening more recently.

■ The Fed will continue to harm the economy by raising interest rates unnecessarily. That's the bad news. The economy will slow and unemployment will rise. The latest survey of economists finds a 70% probability of a recession. But, whether it's technically a recession or "just" a slowdown, the pain will be real for many employees and job-seekers. Sadly, the Fed has caused most of the U.S. recessions since World War II by raising interest rates.

■ Pressure on the Fed to change course will increase as the economy worsens. This will come from Democrats—e.g., the Progressive Caucus in Congress. Republicans have a stake in a bad economy for the 2024 elections; in 2010, they helped ensure that unemployment was 9.4% in October, and Republicans picked up 63 seats in Congress a month later.

■ Congress will intervene again to pressure the White House to end U.S. involvement in the Saudi war in Yemen. Since 2015, the U.S. military has participated in a war led by Saudi Arabia that has killed hundreds of thousands of civilians, including many thousands of children. More than 6 million Yemenis are facing starvation because of the war. Congress can block U.S. involvement in Saudi airstrikes—which would very likely end the war—by invoking the War Powers Resolution. Congress did so twice under President Donald Trump and recently threatened a new vote, forcing the Biden administration to come to the table. In 2023, Congress will help end the war.

■ Congress will pressure the Treasury to allow for mas-

By MARK WEISBROT

InsideSources.com

Mark Weisbrot is co-director of the Center for Economic and Policy Research in Washington. He is the author of *Failed: What the 'Experts' Got Wrong About the Global Economy*. He wrote this for InsideSources.com.



sive international aid to developing countries—at zero cost to the United States—as the world economy worsens. The Treasury Department is currently blocking hundreds of billions of dollars of aid to developing countries that would come from the International Monetary Fund. This has zero cost to the U.S. government and involves no loans or conditions. It could save hundreds of thousands of lives. The House of Representatives will pressure Treasury to allow it at the Fund, as it did successfully last year.

■ Starbucks workers will win a first contract. Interim CEO Howard Schultz does not appear ready to engage with a labor union. But once a majority votes for union representation—as workers have done at more than 260 Starbucks locations—the employer is required by law to bargain in good faith. With a wave of strike actions, backing from the Service Employees International Union and a stronger National Labor Relations Board, Starbucks workers will get their first contract next year—and change the company for the better.

■ The NBA and its players will not opt out of their current collective bargaining agreement. The current contract between the league and the NBA Players Association has an opt-out clause that allows either side to end it a year early. The opt-out deadline was Dec. 15; that's been kicked down the road to Feb. 8, a sign that talks on a new agreement are progressing. The league is due for a new TV contract after the 2024-2025 season, which could be worth more than \$75 billion. Most likely, both sides will want to know more about how that package looks before crafting a new labor deal.

■ Oscars 2023—Spielberg could win. Do you know what people in Hollywood really like? Movies about people in Hollywood. "The Fablemans," Steven Spielberg's semi-autobiographical tale, could be the front-runner for Best Picture, Best Director, or both.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Cancer vaccine hunt makes progress, finally

The long-awaited cancer vaccine revolution is getting a little closer to reality. New data from Moderna Inc. and Merck & Co. suggest that after decades of failures, researchers are finally figuring out the right way to design a vaccine that can teach immune cells how to recognize and combat tumors.

In December, the companies said that when used in concert with Merck's cancer immunotherapy Keytruda, Moderna's mRNA cancer vaccine reduced the risk of certain skin cancers from returning or patient deaths by 44% compared with Keytruda alone.

That number justly generated a lot of excitement. It's the first time an mRNA-based cancer vaccine has proven itself in a randomized study, and with an unambiguously positive outcome. If that result holds up in larger trials, it would be a huge advance both for the mRNA technology behind COVID vaccines and for the field of cancer vaccines in general.

But there are a lot of steps between achieving early, positive data for a subset of melanoma patients and developing a widely accessible, cost-effective treatment. Among the more daunting challenges: The vaccine needs to be tailored to the genetic makeup of an individual patient's tumors.

The study was small, enrolling just 157 people at high risk of their late-stage skin cancer returning. (Moderna and Merck have yet to make available the full dataset, though they plan to do so at an upcoming conference.) Still, even if the results are slightly less dramatic in a bigger study, the vaccine could make a difference for patients. "That would be a substantial change," translating into long-term remissions, says Julie Bauman, director of the George Washington University Cancer Center. Bauman led an earlier study of Moderna's cancer vaccine.

The study enrolled melanoma patients who had undergone surgery to remove any signs of their cancer. Unlike vaccines the public is used to taking—mass-produced shots that aim to prevent people from catching a contagious disease like the flu or polio, Moderna's cancer vaccine instead is intended to keep the disease from returning. It does that by training immune cells to recognize as dangerous proteins found on a patient's own tumor cells.

The hope was that the vaccine would amplify the already substantial benefit of Keytruda, which blocks a method that cancer cells use to hide from the immune system. Amazingly, the combination worked.

Moderna already demonstrated its capacity for developing and manufacturing mRNA vaccines. It had been work-

ing on vaccines for cancer and infectious diseases for more than a decade when the coronavirus pandemic hit, prompting the company to pivot to developing a COVID shot that, along with a similar one developed by Pfizer Inc. and BioNTech, became the first widespread commercial application of mRNA technology.

Building a successful cancer vaccine will be much more difficult. Moderna starts with a biopsy of a patient's tumor, which it then sequences and uses artificial intelligence to pick out the mutations likely allowing the cancer to thrive. Then, mRNAs encoded for the most relevant cancer-driving proteins are packed inside a delivery system called a lipid nanoparticle, the same kind of delivery method used in COVID vaccines.

From tumor biopsy to first vaccine dose, the process can take between eight and 10 weeks, says Moderna Chief Medical Officer Paul Burton. Repeating this over and over for each patient enrolled in the clinical trial was a major undertaking, he adds.

Now imagine doing that for a commercial drug earmarked for thousands rather than for a few hundred people in a controlled study. There are nearly 100,000 cases of melanoma annually in the US, according to the American Cancer Society. While most cases are curable when detected early, more than 7,500 people die every year of the disease.

Bringing down the "needle-to-needle" time between biopsy and immunization will be critical to ensuring the treatment isn't just promising, but practical and accessible to anyone who might benefit from it. One way to speed things up would be to establish regional hubs to quickly process biopsies.

Another measure that eventually could accelerate the development of the melanoma vaccine would be to simplify the vaccine's components. Currently, the vaccine targets a laundry list of 34 mutated proteins to garner the full effect. It would be worth figuring out whether returns start to diminish after, say, 15 or 20 proteins.

Researchers also would like to understand whether certain types of tumors rely on common drivers that, if discovered, could be the foundation for a more broadly designed vaccine that could have some tailor-made components sprinkled in.

Burton says that Moderna so far hasn't seen any common drivers that could help generalize components of the vaccine, but that data are limited—and the hope is that some clues might emerge as the vaccine is used over the long term and many more people are treated.

By **LISA JARVIS**

Bloomberg Opinion

Lisa Jarvis is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist covering biotech, health care and the pharmaceutical industry. Previously, she was executive editor of Chemical & Engineering News.



Scientists also still need to study the best way to use this vaccine for long-term suppression of cancer, considering, for example, whether people need to continue taking it every three weeks for life, or if they can get by with a periodic boost. And if someone's disease progresses, does the vaccine itself need to be retooled to match new mutations that might have cropped up?

Perhaps the biggest question right now is whether the effect seen in melanoma can be extended to other types of cancer. Moderna Chief Executive Officer Stephane Bancel told CNBC recently that the company is moving aggressively into Phase 3 studies with the belief that "anywhere Keytruda works, this should work."

Keytruda, meanwhile, is approved to treat a long list of cancers beyond melanoma—so many, in fact, that it's expected to bring in more than \$24 billion in sales in 2023. Bancel suggested that the vaccine might even make possible responses in tumors where Keytruda has failed, either on its own or by acting synergistically with Merck's drug.

That's an optimistic claim—worth studying, but a feat that has eluded other cancer immunotherapies. Melanoma is what's known as a "hot" tumor, or one that features many mutations and has plenty of immune cells milling about, ready to be pushed into doing their cancer-killing job. It's reasonable to be hopeful that Moderna's vaccine could extend Keytruda's benefits in other hot tumors, such as those found in lung cancer.

But "cold" tumors, or ones without that crowd of immune cells ready to be activated, are a much tougher proposition. In an earlier small study of the Moderna vaccine in solid tumors, for example, none of the patients with colon cancer—a notoriously "cold" tumor—responded, Bauman says.

Another immense challenge is the very high likely cost of a personalized therapy on top of Keytruda, which on its own carries a list price of around \$185,000 per year. The only upside to that hefty price tag is that the companies will be motivated to answer these questions as quickly as possible. Indeed, Bancel has said that Moderna plans to aggressively invest in cancer.

All that money flowing into Moderna's cancer vaccine will teach the field not just about that one product, but how to design, test and use other ones. Let's hope that's the catalyst for the true cancer vaccine revolution, one that could convert cancer from a potentially lethal illness into a chronic, stable disease.

Researchers are finally figuring out the right way to design a vaccine that can teach immune cells how to recognize and combat tumors.

AIRLINE

From page 8

Southwest is not a low-cost airline anymore; its holiday week fares were eye-watering. Generally, it is just as costly to fly with Southwest as on the other majors, which clearly operate in a more efficiently zoned way, rather than hopscotching crews all over the map with breakneck turnarounds.

Incredibly, Southwest, now the nation's largest airline, has been allowed to operate without so-called interline agreements and without any requirement whatsoever to put stranded passengers on other carriers' flights. It needs one. Now. On fear of re-regulation.

Southwest is not the only offender here—internal memos have revealed that American Airlines won't now routinely rebook delayed passengers on other flights unless they have "platinum" status or above—but it is far and away the worst.

Our Grinchy friends at The Wall Street Journal Editorial Board used this week of human misery to warn the federal Department

of Transportation against interfering, apparently trusting Southwest to fix itself. We beg to differ, given the strategic importance of transportation, the oligarchical nature of today's airline industry and the level of public funds just expended. You just can't do this to innocent people.

In times of emergency, interline agreements and prompt rebookings must be required, and full refunds for canceled flights should be immediate and not require hours on the phone. And all of those people whose holidays were ruined deserve proactive additional compensation.

But here's an idea the Journal might like. The draconian federal regulations that cover crew workdays might be worth moderating in an emergency.

Safety must be the first priority, of course. But that can be a more complex matrix than people realize: Is it safer for 160 stressed-out passengers to decide instead to drive through the snow—consider what happened in Buffalo, New York—rather than to allow a single flight attendant an extra hour or two of work so that a flight can take off?

Is it safer to keep a sick older person from medication for days

than allow a pilot another 60 minutes to reach one hub destination? In many cases, it's not so much more regulation that is required as smarter regulation, with the ability to adapt to weather and other emergencies. There also have to be financial incentives to not take people's money and not deliver the goods in a timely way. The European Union put such regulations in place, and such stories in Europe are far less common.

Southwest, we hope, is now committing millions of dollars to upgrading its technology so it will never fail at this level ever again; it has promised as much. And it should be held accountable.

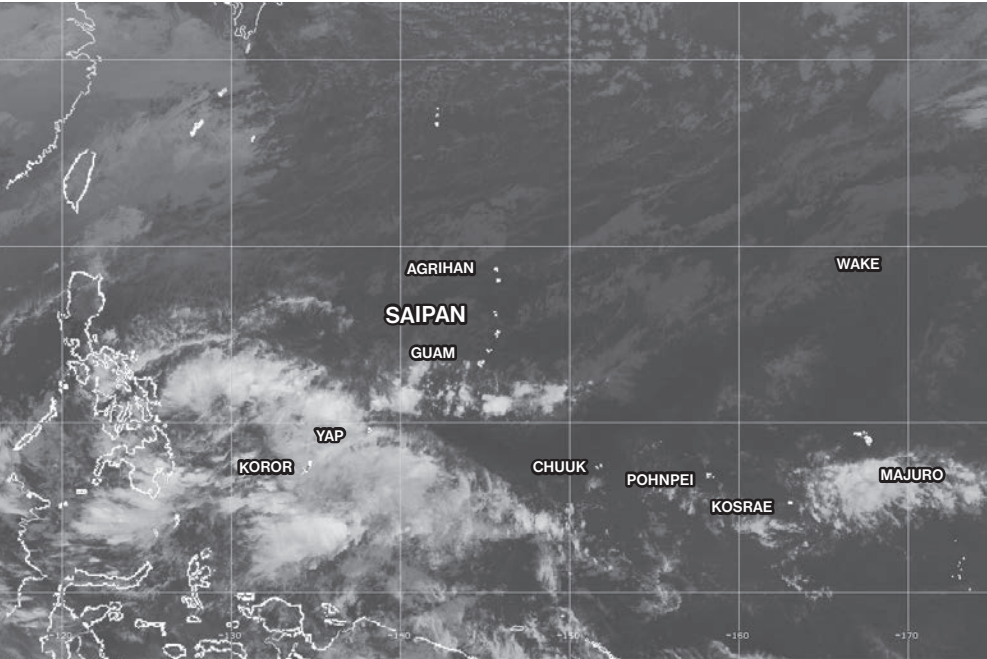
And the long-range planners at the city Department of Aviation might consider making room for a few more flights from competing, non-Southwest carriers at the Southwest Side gateway. Getting so much in bed with only one clearly problematic carrier can mean a lot of people lose their Christmas, their days off work and their all-important time with their family.

All due to outdated software that turns a storm into days of chaos? Please. Not exactly LUV'ing your customers or your employees, is it?

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The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY		SUNDAY	
Scattered showers. Partly sunny		Isolated showers. Mostly sunny		Partly sunny		Mostly sunny		A chance of showers. Mostly cloudy	
86°	78°	86°	78°	86°	78°	86°	78°	86°	78°
YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE									



PICTURE TIME: 8:28 AM, TUESDAY, JANUARY 3, 2023

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Satellite and radar imagery showed isolated showers over the Marianas this morning. Showers will increase during the day.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA			▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°	
Palau	Thunderstorms	85° / 78°	
Yap	Mostly Cloudy	85° / 79°	
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	86° / 81°	
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	87° / 78°	
Kosrae	Showers	87° / 78°	
Majuro	Thunderstorms	86° / 80°	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:43 AM	5:59 PM
Thursday	6:44 AM	5:59 PM
Friday	6:44 AM	6:00 PM
Saturday	6:44 AM	6:01 PM
Sunday	6:45 AM	6:01 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	4:14 AM	3:41 PM
Thursday	-	5:08 AM	4:29 PM
Friday	-	6:01 AM	5:20 PM
Saturday	-	6:52 AM	6:13 PM
Sunday	-	7:40 AM	7:05 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	73° / 63°	
Beijing	Sunny	46° / 27°	
Hong Kong	Mostly Sunny	68° / 59°	
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	82° / 70°	
London	Partly Cloudy	39° / 32°	
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	77° / 50°	
Manila	Rain	88° / 75°	
Melbourne	Mostly Cloudy	72° / 54°	
Miami	Thunderstorms	80° / 65°	
New York	Mostly Cloudy	43° / 36°	
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	48° / 39°	
Paris	Showers	41° / 28°	
Busan	Mostly Sunny	50° / 43°	
Rome	Rain	59° / 46°	
Salem	Showers	41° / 28°	
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	60° / 45°	
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	39° / 34°	
Tokyo	Sunny	48° / 34°	
Washington, DC	Cloudy	43° / 33°	

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
12:12 AM	Low Tide	-0.36	
7:34 AM	High Tide	1.52	
12:23 PM	Low Tide	1.12	
5:07 PM	High Tide	1.61	

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 1, 2023							
DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	9:50AM	10:35AM	Daily	UA174	8:00AM	8:46AM	Daily
SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
UA824	7:05AM	9:45AM	1, 3, 5	UA825	9:25PM	2:00AM+1	2, 4, 7
GUAM-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-GUAM			
PR 111	5:30AM	7:25AM	Daily	PR110	10:05PM	3:55AM+1	Daily
UA193	7:55PM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Palau	UA184	10:55PM	4:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA183	8:00PM	9:50PM	Daily	UA192	10:40PM	6:30AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
				UA189	12:40AM	6:30AM	3, 6
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
UA117/183	9:50AM	9:50PM	Daily via Guam	UA189/174	12:40AM	8:46AM+1	3, 6 via Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau	UA184/174	10:55PM	8:46AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via Guam
OZ624/701	3:50PM	10:35AM+1	3, 6 via Incheon	UA192/174	10:40PM	8:46AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
				OZ704/623	11:50PM	2:20PM+1	2, 5 via Incheon
SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)				INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308	3:15AM	6:55AM	1, 4, 5, 7	OZ623	9:00AM	2:20PM	3, 6
OZ624	3:50PM	7:40PM	3, 6	7C3406	10:10AM	3:30PM	Daily
7C3405	4:35PM	8:25PM	Daily	TW307	8:45PM	2:15AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7
LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. (The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)							

MARIANAS SOUTHERN AIRWAYS					
INITIAL DAILY FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF AUGUST 18, 2022					
SAIPAN TO TINIAN			TINIAN TO SAIPAN		
DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
7:00 A.M.	7:15 A.M.	(Except Sundays)	7:35 A.M.	7:50 A.M.	(Except Sundays)
9:50 A.M.	10:05 A.M.		10:25 A.M.	10:40 A.M.	
4:00 P.M.	4:15 P.M.	(Except Saturdays)	4:35 P.M.	4:50 P.M.	(Except Saturdays)
SAIPAN TO ROTA			ROTA TO SAIPAN		
DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
8:10 A.M.	8:40 A.M.		9:00 A.M.	9:30 A.M.	
1:45 P.M.	2:15 P.M.		2:35 P.M.	3:05 P.M.	
SAIPAN TO GUAM			GUAM TO SAIPAN		
DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
11:10 A.M.	12:00 P.M.		12:30 P.M.	1:20 P.M.	
5:15 P.M.	6:05 P.M.		6:40 P.M.	7:30 P.M.	

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30	9:00	Daily
1302	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1302	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
1303	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
3102	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
3103	16:30	17:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

LIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily

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Business

Hyatt Regency Saipan welcomes 2023 with a bang

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Thumping island music, overflowing drinks, thousands of dollars in raffle prizes, and an eight-minute fireworks display made the New Year's countdown party at the Hyatt Regency Saipan one for the books.

In all, nearly 300 guests trooped to Skipper's Bar where they enjoyed live music performed by the Hide Tide Band with DJ Ken taking over when the band needed a break.

About 30 minutes before it struck midnight, Hyatt general manager Guillaume Delemarle, F&B director Hani Min, and marketing and communications manager Bea O'Malley picked winners of the New Year's countdown party raffle with Natasha Salas winning the grand prize, an iPhone 14 Pro Max.

All in all, everyone had an absolute grand time welcoming the new year in Saipan's first international brand hotel.

Dante Suarez Conlu, who won a one-night stay at the Garapan landmark, said he's already looking forward to welcoming 2024 at the Hyatt.

"It's our first time celebrating the New Year's countdown at Hyatt. At first we were planning to do dinner at Hyatt but since I have to work in the night shift and I'm off at 9pm, we decided to go for the countdown and grab their package which is \$180 for six pax," he said.

Conlu said winning in the raffle was just a bonus.

"The funny thing is we were positive in winning the raffle. It's a good New Year's gift winning the one-night stay. It was fun and exciting!"

Trench Tech Gym owner Cuki Alvarez said aside from Hyatt's proximity to their



From left, Hyatt Regency Saipan marketing and communications manager Bea O'Malley, general manager Guillaume Delemarle with his son Arthur, F&B director Hani Min, and iPhone 14 Pro Max winner Natasha Salas.



The High Tide Band performing at Hyatt's New Year's countdown party.

house at Mihaville Estate, his family always goes to the Hyatt New Year's countdown because it's "always fun."

"The No. 1 reason why we love Hyatt so much is because it's super close to our house! Secondly, they always raffle out great prizes. Third, the ambiance is awesome because of fresh air, grass and sand, which always feels good. We brought our own chairs and relaxed with friends and family and enjoyed the countdown!"

Alvarez said the fireworks this year also weren't too shabby.

"Last but not least—the fireworks are always a great grand finale, especially for the kiddos."

CNMI National Triathlon Team member Kathy Pagapular Ruszala said there was no doubt in their mind that they will celebrate New Year's Eve at Hyatt.

"New Year's Eve has always been one of my favorite times

of the year. Everything always seems to come alive and celebrating it at the Hyatt with family and friends made it an even more spectacular time. The kids were running around the grounds with their friends and only checked in when they were hungry or thirsty. I truly enjoyed listening to the High Tide band, DJ Ken, and the gorgeous emcee. They kept the energetic vibes going while we waited for the firework display to bring in the new year,"

money laundering and terrorist financing.

The government eventually released new currency notes worth 500 and 2,000 rupees. However, the sudden decision caused losses for small businesses and manufacturers, bringing on an economic slump and months of financial chaos for ordinary, cash-dependent Indians who lined up at banks and ATMs for days as cash ran dry.

According to the Centre for Monitoring the Indian Economy, a Mumbai-based research firm, India lost 3.5 million jobs in the year following demonetization.

The economy took another blow in 2017 when the government replaced a complex

system of cascading federal and state taxes with a single Goods and Services Tax. Many small businesses — the backbone of much of India's economy — were unable to comply with the new law and shut down.

India's main opposition Congress party Monday said the top court's decision said nothing about the impact of demonetization and whether its objects were achieved, calling the currency ban "a singularly disastrous move."

"The majority Supreme Court verdict deals with the limited issue of the process of decision-making, not with its outcomes," Jairam Ramesh, the party's spokesperson said in a statement.



Nearly 300 took part in the New Year's countdown party at the Hyatt.

said Ruszala, whose husband Brad, served as the New Year's countdown party host.

Delemarle said he's happy with the turnout during the New Year's countdown party, but ultimately downplayed it.

"We're very happy. We don't really care about the number [of the crowd] but what's important is keeping

Saipan alive again. It's really having people together and making sure they have a good time," he said.

O'Malley thanked the following sponsors for the event: Hyatt Regency Guam, Marianas Southern Airways, IT&E, Docomo Pacific, Triple J, Pacifica Insurance Underwriters Inc., and Current CNMI.

New Israeli government vows to develop West Bank tourism

JERUSALEM (AP)—The tourism minister of Israel's new hardline government on Sunday promised to invest in developing the West Bank, calling the occupied area "our local Tuscany."

Haim Katz made the comments days after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's new government took office, promising in its coalition guidelines to make West Bank settlement construction a top priority. His coalition includes far-right settler leaders in top posts.

Israel captured the West Bank in the 1967 Mideast war and has built dozens of settlements that are now home to roughly 500,000 Israelis.

The Palestinians claim the entire area as part of a future independent state and consider the settlements illegal — a position that is widely shared by the international community. Israel's commitment to deepening its control of the West Bank has threatened to put it on a collision course with some of its closest allies.

At a ceremony Sunday, Katz said he would channel resources to promote tourism in the West Bank. "We will in-

vest in areas that may not have received sufficient support to date," he said. "For example, our local Tuscany in Judea and Samaria," he added, using the biblical term for the West Bank favored by religious and right-wing Israelis.

The West Bank settler community has developed a small tourism sector that includes hotels, bed and breakfasts and wineries. Israel considers these industries to be part of the country's broader tourism sector, while international human rights groups have said they deepen control of occupied territory.

Airbnb in 2018 said it would bar listings in the Israeli settlements, but it quickly backed down under heavy Israeli pressure. Last year, Booking.com said it was adding warnings to its listings there.

On Friday, the U.N. General Assembly asked the U.N.'s highest judicial body to give its opinion on the legality of Israeli policies in the occupied West Bank.

Netanyahu called the resolution "disgraceful" and said Israel is not obligated to cooperate with the International Court of Justice.

India's top court upholds legality of 2016 currency ban

NEW DELHI (AP)—India's top court said Monday that the government's surprise decision in 2016 to demonetize high-value bills was legal and taken after consultation with India's central bank.

The five-judge constitution bench was hearing petitions challenging the currency ban that rendered 86% of India's currency invalid without warning. They contended that the move was not a considered decision of the government and should be struck down by the court.

Four judges on the five-member bench said the government made the decision after consulting with the Reserve Bank of India and

stated there was no flaw in the decision-making process.

Justice BV Nagarathna, however, gave a dissenting judgment, calling the decision "unlawful" and "an exercise of power, contrary to law." She said the currency ban could have been carried out through an act of Parliament, not by the government.

In November 2016, Prime Minister Narendra Modi made a surprise TV announcement that all 500-rupee and 1,000-rupee notes would be withdrawn immediately from circulation. The government defended the decision by saying it would root out illegally hoarded cash, fight corruption and crack down on

Nation

Suspect in Idaho slayings not expected to fight extradition

STROUDSBURG, Pa. (AP)—A man facing first-degree murder charges in the slayings of four University of Idaho students last fall is not expected to fight extradition at a hearing Tuesday in Pennsylvania, where he was captured at his parents home.

Bryan Kohberger, a 28-year-old doctoral student and teaching assistant in the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology at Washington State University, was taken into custody early Friday by state police in eastern Pennsylvania, authorities said.

Monroe County's chief public defender, Jason LaBar, said his client is eager to be exonerated and plans to tell a judge in Pennsylvania that he will waive his extradition hearing so he can be quickly taken to Idaho.

LaBar said his client should be presumed innocent and "not tried in the court of public opinion."

Capt. Anthony Dahlinger, of the Moscow Police Department in Idaho, told The Associated Press on Saturday that authorities believe Kohberger was responsible for all four murders.

"We believe we've got our man," he said, adding that investigators obtained samples of Kohberger's DNA directly from him after he was arrested.

Kohberger's relatives in Pennsylvania have expressed sympathy for the families of the victims but vowed to support him and promote "his presumption of innocence."

His parents, Michael and Maryann, and his two older sisters, Amanda and Melissa, said in a state-



A flyer seeking information about the killings of four University of Idaho students who were found dead is displayed on a table along with buttons and bracelets on Nov. 30, 2022, during a vigil in memory of the victims in Moscow, Idaho. AP

ment released Sunday by his attorney that they "care deeply for the four families who have lost their precious children. There are no words that can adequately express the sadness we feel, and we pray each day for them."

The family said that relatives will continue to let the legal process unfold, and that "as a family we will love and support our son and brother." They say they have fully cooperated with law enforcement to try to "seek the truth and promote his presumption of innocence rather than judge unknown facts and make erroneous assumptions."

Latah County prosecutors in Idaho have said they believe Kohberger broke into the students' home near the university campus intending to commit murder. Their

bodies were found Nov. 13, several hours after investigators believe they died.

Wave of migrants in Florida Keys is a crisis, sheriff says

KEY WEST, Fla. (AP)—At least 500 migrants have arrived in small boats along the Florida Keys over the last several days in what the local sheriff's office described on Monday as a "crisis."

Economic turmoil, food shortages and soaring inflation in Cuba and other parts of the Caribbean is spurring the most recent wave of migration. Over the weekend, 300 migrants arrived at the sparsely populated Dry Tortugas National Park, about 70 miles (113 kilometers) west of Key West. The park was closed so that law enforcement and medical personnel could evaluate the group before moving them to Key West, the park tweeted.

The students — Kaylee Goncalves, 21, of Rathdrum, Idaho; Madison Mo-

gen, 21, of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho; Xana Kernodle, 20, of Post Falls, Idaho; and

Separately, 160 migrants arrived by boats in other parts of the Florida Keys over the New Year's Day weekend, officials said. On Monday, 30 people in two new groups of migrants were found in the Middle Keys.

In a news release, Monroe County Sheriff Rick Ramsay criticized the federal response to the uptick in migrant arrivals, saying they were stretching local resources. U.S. Border Patrol told the sheriff's office that the federal response to some of the migrants arriving may have to wait a day, the news release said.

"Refugee arrivals require a lot of resources from the Sheriff's Office as we help our fed-

eral law enforcement partners ensure the migrants are in good health and safe," said Ramsay, whose office's jurisdiction encompasses the Florida Keys. "This shows a lack of a working plan by the federal government to deal with a mass migration issue that was foreseeable."

Officials at Dry Tortugas National Park said they expected it be closed for several days because of the space and resources needed to attend to the migrants. The national park is at the southern tip of the continental U.S. — and attracts scuba divers and snorkelers for its coral reefs, nesting sea turtles, tropical fish and shipwrecks.

"Like elsewhere in the Florida Keys, the park has recently

Ethan Chapin, 20, of Conway, Washington — were members of the university's Greek system and close friends.

Mogen, Goncalves and Kernodle lived in the three-story rental home with two other roommates. Kernodle and Chapin were dating, and he had been visiting the house that night.

Latah County prosecutors have said the affidavit for four charges of first-degree murder will remain sealed until he is returned. He is also charged with felony burglary.

Investigators have asked for information about Kohberger from anyone who knows him, and Dahlinger said investigators got 400 calls to a tip line within the first hour of that request. He said they were "trying to build this picture now of him: Who he is, his history, how we got to this event, why this event occurred."

seen an increase in people arriving by boat from Cuba and landing on the islands of Dry Tortugas National Park," the National Park Service said in a news release.

In addition to landing at the national park over the weekend, 160 other migrants arrived in the Middle and Upper Keys. At least 88 of the migrants are from Cuba, U.S. Customs and Border Protection said in a tweet.

U.S. Border Patrol and Coast Guard crews patrolling South Florida and the Keys have been experiencing the largest escalation of migrations by boat in nearly a decade, with hundreds of interceptions in recent months, mostly of people from Cuba and Haiti.

ACROSS THE NATION

Jan. 6 panel shutting down after referring Trump for crimes

WASHINGTON (AP)—The House Jan. 6 committee is shutting down, having completed a whirlwind 18-month investigation of the 2021 Capitol insurrection and having sent its work to the Justice Department along with a recommendation for prosecuting former President Donald Trump.

The committee's time officially ends Tuesday when the new Republican-led House is sworn in. With many of the committee's staff already departed, remaining aides have spent the last two weeks releasing many of the panel's

materials, including its 814-page final report, about 200 transcripts of witness interviews, and documents used to support its conclusions.

Lawmakers said they wanted to make their work public to underscore the seriousness of the attack and Trump's multi-pronged effort to try to overturn the election.

"Accountability is now critical to thwart any other future scheme to overturn an election," Chairman Bennie Thompson, D-Miss., and Vice Chairwoman Liz Cheney, R-Wyo., wrote in a departing message on Monday. "We have made a series of criminal referrals, and our system of Justice is responsible for

what comes next."

Pennsylvania officer killed, 2nd wounded; suspect shot dead

BRACKENRIDGE, Pa. (AP)—The man suspected of fatally shooting a Pennsylvania police chief and wounding another officer in confrontations during a foot pursuit near Pittsburgh was killed by police after a chase later Monday, authorities said.

The officers were shot blocks apart in Brackenridge, an Allegheny County town northeast of Pittsburgh. The suspect carjacked a vehicle, and when Pittsburgh detectives later spotted it, he fled, Allegheny County Police Su-

perintendent Christopher Kearns said.

The suspect crashed the vehicle after a car chase, ran into a wooded area and then toward a housing development, and fired at the pursuing detectives, who returned fire and killed him Monday evening, Kearns said.

State Attorney General Josh Shapiro, the governor-elect, identified the slain officer in a tweet as Brackenridge Police Chief Justin McIntire, saying he "ran towards danger to keep Pennsylvanians safe — and he made the ultimate sacrifice in service to community."

Police say the second officer was wounded in the leg

and is expected to survive.

One dead, three injured in plane crash at Utah airport

PROVO, Utah (AP)—A small plane with four passengers crashed at a Utah airport on Monday, killing one and injuring the other three, according to city officials in Provo.

The plane crashed immediately after takeoff and one of the three survivors was transported to the hospital in critical condition. The other two sustained "minor bumps and bruises," officials said.

The National Transportation Safety Board tweeted that it was investigating the

crash of the aircraft, which it identified as an Embraer 505, a light business jet.

The airport in Provo, just south of Salt Lake City, will remain closed until noon on Tuesday, and a number of flights have been cancelled, according to the airport's website.

Brian Torgersen, the airport manager, told FOX13 that the scene of the crash was "devastating" and was surprised that two of those on board made it out with relatively minor injuries.

Other details of the crash, including its destination and the identities of those on board, have yet to be released.

Asia

Floods in PH leave 51 dead, over 12 missing



In this image provided by the Philippine Coast Guard, an elderly woman sits on a chair while being carried by coast guard personnel wading through floodwaters in Plaridel, Misamis Occidental province in the southern Philippines, Monday, Dec. 26, 2022.

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Thousands of people in the Philippines remained in emergency shelters in the wake of devastating Christmas flooding, as the death toll climbed to 51 with 19 missing, authorities said Monday.

Images showed residents in southern Misamis Occidental province sweeping away thick mud from the floors of their homes. In the seaside village of Cabol-anonan, coconut trees were uprooted and huts made of light material were nearly flattened.

The Northern Mindanao region bore the brunt of the disaster, reporting 25 deaths, according to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and

Management Council. Most of the deaths were from drowning and landslides, and among the missing were fishermen whose boats capsized.

Floods have subsided in most parts, but more than 8,600 people were still in shelters.

Over 4,500 houses were damaged by the floods, along with roads and bridges, and some areas still struggle with disrupted power and water supply, the disaster management agency said.

Ivy Amor Amparo, a hospital worker from Ginoog city in Misamis Oriental province, said that the seaside home of her parents and siblings was damaged by big waves and uprooted trees. Rescuers fer-

ried the mother of two and her relatives in a truck to a nearby shelter, where they spent the Christmas weekend.

She said her father bought materials using the 5,000 pesos (\$90) cash aid from the local government to build a temporary shelter for the household, whose seven members are now miserably cramped in the small living room of the damaged house.

"Their things are still with the neighbor and some in our house," Amparo told The Associated Press in a phone interview. "When they need to take a bath at the community water pump, they have to get their clothes from the neighbor's house."

ing involving U.S. nuclear assets and that the United States responded positively about the idea.

Asked by a reporter later at the White House about whether the two countries were discussing joint nuclear exercises, Biden replied, "No."

Yoon's spokesperson, Kim Eun-hye, issued a statement Tuesday saying that Seoul and Washington "are discussing an intel-sharing, a joint planning and subsequent joint action plans over the management of U.S. nuclear assets in response to North Korea's nuclear (threats)."

Kim said Biden likely answered "no" because a reporter tersely asked him about a nuclear exercise without providing any background information.

In the Chosun Ilbo interview, Yoon said that while the U.S. nuclear weapons belong to the U.S., planning, intel-sharing

and exercises involving them must be jointly conducted with South Korea. He said he finds it difficult to assure his people of a security guarantee with the current levels of U.S. security commitment.

South Korea has no nuclear weapons and is under the protection of a U.S. "nuclear umbrella," which guarantees a devastating American response in the event of an attack on its ally. But some experts question the effectiveness of such a security commitment, saying the decision to use U.S. nuclear weapons lies with the U.S. president.

Yoon's office didn't provide many details about his government's discussion with the United States. Some observers say South Korea is seeking to obtain a greater role on U.S. decision-making process on the deployment of its nuclear assets in times of tensions with North Korea.

World

Moscow says Ukrainian rocket strike kills 63 Russian troops

KYIV, Ukraine (AP)—Ukrainian forces fired rockets at a facility in the eastern Donetsk region where Russian soldiers were stationed, killing 63 of them, Russia's defense ministry said Monday, in one of the deadliest attacks on the Kremlin's forces since the war began more than 10 months ago.

Ukrainian forces fired six rockets from a HIMARS launch system and two of them were shot down, a defense ministry statement said. It did not say when the strike happened.

The strike, using a U.S.-supplied precision weapon that has proven critical in enabling Ukrainian forces to hit key targets, delivered a new setback for Russia which in recent months has reeled from a Ukrainian counteroffensive.

According to the governor of Russia's Samara region, Dmitry Azarov, an unspecified number of residents of the region were among those killed and wounded by the strike on the town of Makiivka.

Russian military bloggers, whose information has largely been reliable during the war, said ammunition stored close

to the facility had exploded in the attack and contributed to the high number of casualties.

Expressing anger at the losses, Daniil Bezsonov, an official with the Russian-appointed administration in Russian-occupied Donetsk, called for the punishment of military officers who ordered a large number of troops to be stationed at the facility.

The Ukrainian military appeared to acknowledge the attack Monday, with the General Staff confirming that Makiivka was hit on Dec. 31, and saying 10 Russian military vehicles were destroyed or damaged. It added that Russian personnel losses were still being clarified.

In a claim that could not be independently verified, the Strategic Communications Directorate of Ukraine's Armed Forces had maintained Sunday that some 400 mobilized Russian soldiers were killed in a vocational school building in Makiivka and about 300 more were wounded. The Russian statement said the strike occurred "in the area of Makiivka" and didn't mention the vocational school.

Meanwhile, Russia de-

ployed multiple exploding drones in another nighttime attack on Ukraine, officials said Monday, as the Kremlin signaled no letup in its strategy of using bombardments to target the country's energy infrastructure and wear down Ukrainian resistance to its invasion.

The barrage was the latest in a series of relentless year-end attacks, including one that killed three civilians on New Year's Eve.

On Monday, Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko said that 40 drones "headed for Kyiv" overnight. All of them were destroyed, according to air defense forces.

Klitschko said 22 drones were destroyed over Kyiv, three in the outlying Kyiv region and 15 over neighboring provinces.

Energy infrastructure facilities were damaged as the result of the attack and an explosion occurred in one city district, the mayor said. It wasn't immediately clear whether that was caused by drones or other munitions. A wounded 19-year-old man was hospitalized, Klitschko added, and emergency power outages were underway in the capital.

65,000 view Benedict XVI's body lying in state at Vatican

VATICAN CITY (AP)—Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI's body, his head resting on a pair of crimson pillows, lay in state in St. Peter's Basilica on Monday as tens of thousands queued to pay tribute to the pontiff who shocked the world by retiring a decade ago.

On the eve of the first of three days of viewing, Italian security officials had said at least 25,000-30,000 people would come on Monday. But by the end of the first day's viewing, some 65,000 persons had passed by the bier, the Vatican said.

As daylight broke, 10 white-gloved Papal Gentlemen — lay assistants to pontiffs and papal households — carried the body on a cloth-covered wooden stretcher after its arrival at the basilica to its resting place in front of the main altar under Bernini's towering bronze canopy.

A Swiss Guard saluted as Benedict's body was brought in through a side door after it was transferred in a van from the chapel of the monastery grounds where the increasingly frail, 95-year-old former pontiff died on Satur-

day morning.

His longtime secretary, Archbishop Georg Gaenswein, and a handful of consecrated laywomen who served in Benedict's household, followed the van by foot for a few hundred yards in a silent procession toward the basilica. Some of the women stretched out a hand to touch the body with respect.

Before the rank-and-file faithful were allowed into the basilica, prayers were recited and the basilica's archpriest, Cardinal Mauro Gambetti, sprinkled holy water over the body, and a small cloud of incense was released near the bier. Benedict's hands were clasped, a rosary around his fingers.

Just after 9 a.m. (0800 GMT), the doors of the basilica were swung open so the public, some of whom had waited for hours in the pre-dawn damp, could pay their respects to the late pontiff, who retired from the papacy in 2013 — the first pope to do so in 600 years.

Faithful and curious, the public strode briskly up the center aisle to pass by the bier

with its cloth draping after waiting in a line that by mid-morning snaked around St. Peter's Square.

Benedict's body was dressed with a miter, the peaked headgear of a bishop, and a red cloak.

Filippo Tuccio, 35, said he came from Venice on an overnight train to view Benedict's body.

"I wanted to pay homage to Benedict because he had a key role in my life and my education," Tuccio said.

"When I was young I participated in World Youth Days," he said, referring to the jamborees of young faithful held periodically and attended by pontiffs. Tuccio added that he had studied theology, and "his pontificate accompanied me during my university years."

"He was very important for me: for what I am, my way of thinking, my values," Tuccio continued.

Among those coming to the basilica viewing was Cardinal Walter Kasper, like Benedict, a German theologian. Kasper served as head of the Vatican's Christian unity office during Benedict's papacy.

Good Housekeeping

DREAMSTIME
Moving is a very personal experience. It may be best to use a company with which someone you trust has had a positive experience.

Tips for moving in the new year



By CATHY HOBBS
Tribune News Service

Moving for many is a stressful life experience. The new year is a popular time for those looking to make a life transition to take the plunge. When it comes time for you or your family to make your move, here are some key tips to keep in mind.

■ **Ask family and friends for recommendations.** Moving is a very personal experience. It may be best to use a company with which someone you trust has had a positive experience.

■ **Secure at least three quotes.** The lowest quote may not be the best choice. Be sure to also consider a company's

quality of work.

■ **Bigger isn't always better.** Large companies have multiple crews, and your experience may depend on the movers assigned to your move that day. With a smaller company, you may likely deal directly with the owner or at least get a more personal touch.

■ **Looking to save? Pack**

or unpack yourself. These add-on services may not be needed.

■ **Have pricey art or valuables?** Look for a company that specializes in crating, wrapping and moving higher-end items. Not every moving company has this level of expertise.

■ **Try not to move at the beginning or the end of the**

month. Many moving companies have different pricing structures depending on the time of the year and/or time of the month.

■ **Read reviews.** Online reviews from real customers may impact your decision.

■ **Oversee your move personally.** It is always best for you to be on site on the day

of your move.

■ **Separate and pack essentials.** There may be a delay in receiving all of your belongings. Be sure to keep the essentials packed in a suitcase you can carry with you.

■ **Purge and reorganize.** One of the biggest mistakes you can make is to take your clutter with you!

First-time home buyers' mistakes

By AMANDA BELL
Angie's List

The experience of buying your first home often brings up a lot of emotions. With so many new considerations and complicated processes to navigate, it's easy to get tripped up in details and make costly mistakes.

Read on to learn how to avoid making common first-time buyer missteps.

Don't skip home loan qualification

Once you decide to buy a home, it's tempting to start touring properties right away. Cheryl Grant, Realtor at Keller Williams North in Grand Rapids, Michigan, advises you to resist.

Instead, make your first stop a lending office. Figure out how much you qualify to borrow before wasting your own time and that of a seller, she says. You don't want to sign a contract only to discover the bank won't loan you the necessary funds.

Know what you can afford

Many first-time buyers fail to budget properly, often confusing what they can afford with what lenders tell them they qualify to borrow. If you haven't yet, make a list of your monthly expenses before settling on a house budget.

"You absolutely should not be looking at homes out of your price range," says Brian Pakulla, a Realtor at Pakulla Professionals Re/Max Advan-

tage Realty in Ellicott City, Maryland.

Doing so could cause you to stretch your finances too thin or make you feel dissatisfied when you do budget and then start to look at homes in your price range, he says.

Don't focus too much on the flaws

It's fun to dream about the items on your wish list, but some first-time buyers have a hard time compromising to meet their budgets. Don't let outdated features steer you away from a house that otherwise meets your criteria. On the other hand, don't compromise on your must-haves.

"You can always change the cosmetics of a house, but you can't change the view, location or floor plan easily," Pakulla says.

Don't fall blindly in love

You think you find "the one" and immediately develop an emotional connection to it, never mind the leaky roof and creaky floors. You jump to put an offer in, but your real estate agent urges you to reconsider.

At that point, Grant says take heed. Falling head over heels for a home can blind you to its true value or flaws that should be deal-breakers.

Don't wait too long

Today's housing market is competitive. If you spend too much time debating whether to put in an offer, a quicker buyer may snatch up the house



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The experience of buying your first home often brings up a lot of emotions. With so many new considerations and complicated processes to navigate, it's easy to get tripped up in details and make costly mistakes.

you've been eyeing.

"Some first-time buyers have a difficult time moving that quickly even if it's a good home in their price range," Grant says. "My job is to explain how fast you need to move in this market, but I don't make people do anything if they're not comfortable. I show them the pros and cons and help them make the right decision."

Don't skip the home inspection

Once a seller accepts your offer you may be tempted to fast-forward the process and skip the home inspection, but it's important to know if the house is in solid shape.

Aside from helping to identify any major structural flaws, a home inspection can help you budget for future maintenance issues. Consider it a "new home" orientation, Pakulla says.

"Go through the inspection to understand how your future

home operates mechanically," he says. "It'll have some blemishes, but you'll learn and make sure nothing will be a major pitfall."

Keep resale in mind

It might seem preposterous to think about selling a house you haven't yet purchased, but experts recommend planning ahead. Many buyers don't factor in features that could affect a home's resale value, like number of bedrooms or whether it has a garage or basement, or if the home will suit their future needs, which is a common mistake.

"So many first-time buyers say they aren't thinking of children now, so school districts aren't a consideration for them," Grant says.

Even if you're not planning to have children, she says a home's location within a coveted school district often leads to a higher resale value down the line.

Painting over wallpaper? It's possible

By OSEYE BOYD
Angie's List

While painting over wallpaper isn't the best option, sometimes it's the only option.

Forget what you've heard: It's possible to paint over all wallpaper—and not just the paintable type.

While it's always preferable to remove wallpaper before painting, it's not always possible. Sometimes, you'll find layer upon layer of wallpaper, or removal will cause significant wall damage, says Jeff Sellers, owner of Merrifield Paint and Design of Arlington, Virginia.

"In some of these older homes, when you start pulling paper off you really don't know what you're getting into," Sellers says. "You can get the paper off and find the wall is damaged, and that's why they put the wallpaper up. You never know why people put up wallpaper."

Sellers says the type of wallpaper is a good indicator of whether it will come off easily. Paper-backed wallpaper is more difficult to remove than vinyl. You'll likely need to use a scoring device and adhesive remover, which may prove laborious and result in possible wall damage.

How to paint over wallpaper

You may be tempted to slap some paint on the wall, but there's more to it. Without proper preparation, the wallpaper will eventually lift and begin to show through the

paint—and look like painted over wallpaper.

According to experts, the wall should be clean and dust free. Remove all loose ends. If unable to remove, glue or cut away, spot prime and fill holes with spackle. Prime the wallpaper with an oil-based primer and skim the wallpaper with drywall mud to cover seams from the wallpaper and create a smooth wall. After skimming, sand the wall and prime again. Be sure the wall is dust free before applying paint.

"What matters is that you use an oil-based primer to seal the wallpaper," says Carlos Mendoza of Carlos Mendoza Painting, in Spring, Texas. "That's what's going to seal the wallpaper."

Once you've prepped the wall, Mendoza recommends using satin finish paint instead of flat, which is porous. If you prefer, you can use flat paint. However, because it's porous, flat paint holds dirt and is difficult to clean.

"The satin finish does show imperfections, but as long as you keep the texture consistent, you should be OK," Mendoza says.

Test before you paint wallpaper

Avoid bubbling, lifting or other issues with the wallpaper by testing a couple of spots and allowing to dry completely before painting the entire wall, Octave Villar, manager of Behr application laboratory in Santa Ana, California.

Life & Style

Jeremy Renner undergoes surgery after snow plow accident

RENO, Nevada (AP) — Jeremy Renner suffered blunt chest trauma and orthopedic injuries in a snow plow accident in Reno, Nevada, on Sunday, a representative for the actor said Monday, and remains in critical but stable condition after undergoing surgery.

A publicist for Renner said in a statement that the 51-year-old “Avengers” star is in an intensive care unit following surgery on Monday.

“Jeremy’s family would like to express their gratitude to the incredible doctors and nurses looking after him, Truckee Meadows Fire and Rescue, Washoe County Sheriff, Reno City Mayor Hillary Schieve” and others, read the statement. “They are also tremendously overwhelmed and appreciative of the outpouring of love and support from his fans.”

Authorities and Renner’s representative haven’t said how the accident occurred. The Washoe County Sheriff’s Office said late Sunday that Ren-



(Photo by Vianney Le Caer/Invision/AP, File)

Jeremy Renner poses for photographers upon arrival at the UK Fan Screening of the film “Hawkeye,” in London, Thursday, Nov. 11, 2021. Renner is being treated for serious injuries that happened while he was plowing snow. The actor’s representative said Sunday, Jan. 1, 2023, that Renner is in critical condition although he is stable.

ner had to be flown by helicopter to a hospital for treatment.

Renner was injured in an area near Mt. Rose Highway, a road linking Lake Tahoe, which straddles the Nevada-California border, and south Reno. Renner owns a home in Washoe County, which includes Reno, and told the Reno Gazette Jour-

nal in 2019 that he chose the area because Reno was the right-sized city for him, it has majestic scenery and it allowed him and his family to ski frequently.

Renner was the only person involved in Sunday’s accident, and the sheriff’s office said in a news release that it is investigating.

Renner plays Hawkeye, a sharp-shooting member of the superhero Avengers squad in Marvel’s sprawling movie and television universe.

He is a two-time acting Oscar nominee, scoring back-to-back nods for “The Hurt Locker” and “The Town.” Renner’s portrayal of a bomb disposal specialist

Prince Harry says he wants his father and brother back

LONDON (AP)—Prince Harry has said he wants to have his father and brother back and that he wants “a family, not an institution,” during a TV interview ahead of the publication of his memoir.

The interview with Britain’s ITV channel is due to be released this Sunday. In clips released Monday, Harry was shown saying that “they feel as though it is better to keep

us somehow as the villains” and that “they have shown absolutely no willingness to reconcile”—though it was not clear who he was referring to.

Harry, also known as the Duke of Sussex, and his wife Meghan have aired their grievances against the British monarchy since the couple stepped down as senior royals in 2020 and moved to California, where they now live with

their two young children.

Harry, 38, has previously spoken about his estrangement from his father, King Charles III, and elder brother Prince William since his departure from the U.K.

Last month Netflix released “Harry & Meghan,” a six-part series that detailed the couple’s experiences leading to their decision to make a new start in the U.S.

In that documentary, Harry

was scathing about how the royal press team worked, and spoke about how his relationship with William and the rest of the royal household broke down. Meghan described wanting to end her life as she struggled to cope with toxic U.K. press coverage.

Harry’s autobiography, titled “Spare”—recalling the saying “the heir and the spare”—is being released on Jan. 10.

in Iraq in 2009’s “The Hurt Locker” helped turn him into a household name.

“The Avengers” in 2012 cemented him as part of

Marvel’s grand storytelling ambitions, with his character appearing in several sequels and getting its own Disney+ series, “Hawkeye.”

Brian May says knighthood now comes with a little bit more clout



(Jonathan Buckmaster/Pool Photo via AP, File)

Queen guitarist Brian May performs during the Platinum Jubilee concert taking place in front of Buckingham Palace, London, on June 4, 2022, on the third of four days of celebrations to mark the Platinum Jubilee. Brian May is now a “Sir.” May, who also has a doctorate in astrophysics and is an animal welfare advocate, received a knighthood Friday Dec. 30, 2022 as part of the U.K.’s annual New Year’s Honors list.

LONDON (AP)—Queen guitarist Brian May is now a “Sir.”

May, who also has a doctorate in astrophysics and is an animal welfare advocate, received a knighthood Friday as part of the U.K.’s annual New Year’s Honors list. The Queen guitarist, who was honored for services to music and charity, said he hopes the knighthood will give him “a little bit more clout.”

“Maybe a few more people will listen to me than would otherwise, you know, if it’s Sir Brian on the phone,” said May, who spoke to The Associated Press via Zoom from his house in Windlesham, Surrey.

He was among hundreds of artists, community leaders and

athletes who were recognized on the first such list to be signed off by King Charles III.

May has campaigned against badger culling and fox hunting through an animal welfare group he founded in 2010—named Save Me after the 1980 Queen song. Some animals he’s rescued over the years were released onto his land.

“I’ve felt for a long time that we had this false idea that humans are the only important species on the planet, and I don’t think an alien visitor would view it that way. I think every species and every individual has the right to a decent life and a decent death. That’s kind of where I come from,” he said.

Husband’s annual excursion doesn’t play well at home

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I have been married nine years and have four children, ages 5, 3, 2 and 9 months. For the past three years, my husband has been attending a weeklong music festival where he camps with a group of friends, many of whom are single. He met most of them attending this particular fest.

When they are at these shows, they partake in psychedelics and other party drugs. The arena is wild, with scantily clad women and people partying to the fullest. I have explained to him how this bothers me and that I don’t believe it’s the best environment for a married man and father of four small children. I feel it threatens our marriage. He says I can “come if I want,” but that I’d need to find child care for the week (an option we don’t have since losing our parents).

In truth, I feel like a burden to him, and he prefers going solo to “get a release” from the everyday responsibilities of our life together. Each year, I ask him not to go, but he does it anyway. I’d greatly appreciate your insight about this.

LEFT BEHIND IN REAL LIFE

DEAR LEFT BEHIND: You are not a “burden.” You are shouldering the entire responsibility of caring for the family while he goes off and indulges himself. If this trip is your husband’s one-week escape from reality, is he willing to agree to

the same for you? I’m sure you could benefit from a week away from mothering three small children and an infant.

While I would equate your husband’s escape to the music festival with the hunting and fishing trips some husbands take each year, the difference is that there are fewer “temptations” on those other outdoor pastimes. If he’s a good husband the other 51 weeks of the year, and there is nothing you can do to dissuade him, then dwell on the positive. If he isn’t, you may have some serious thinking to do about whether you want to remain in this marriage.

■■■■■

DEAR ABBY: My wife and I have assisted a local youngster who was abandoned at birth and bounced through foster care. We helped him finish college and start his first job.

Here’s the problem: “Samuel” has become engaged to an attractive, professional woman my wife and I both like. However, he just told us she insists upon bringing her parents on the honeymoon. Her parents feel strongly that they should go, even to the extent of arguing with Samuel about it. I have never heard of anything like this. His fiancée is 28 years old. I’m very wary about it. What advice would you give him?

CROWDED HONEYMOON

DEAR CROWDED: Unless Samuel and his fiancée have

DEAR ABBY

BY ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



been living together for a long time and he’s very close to her family, the advice I would give HIM would be to have plenty of **PREMARITAL COUNSELING** before he marches down the aisle. There’s likely more than one issue that should be ironed out before any vows are exchanged, and it would help to avert disagreements that could cause problems after the wedding.

■■■

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in “The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It.” To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

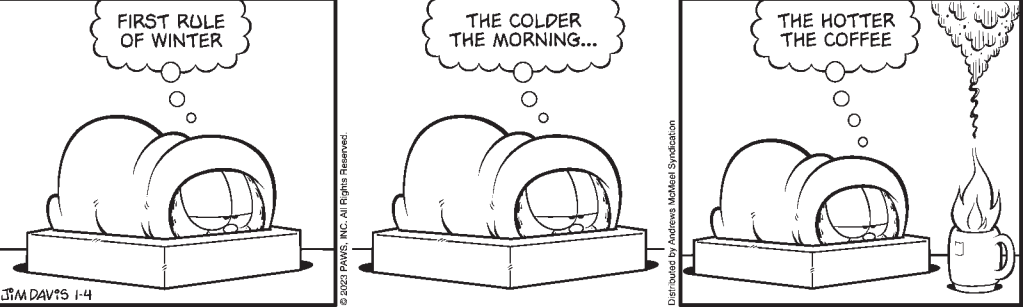
Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

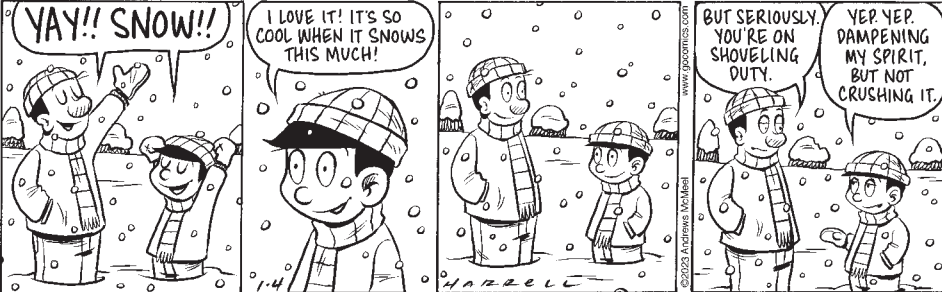


Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	35 —	DOWN	13 Golf bag
1 Green gem	Domini	1 Muppet master	item
5 Flop toothpaste	Open a tube	19 Lusty look	
8 Thick chunk		20 Science room	
12 From Roma or Napoli	37 Kam-pala's land	21 Way out	
14 Just adorable	40 Solid-rock insert	22 Verdi heroine	
15 Dutch painter Piet	41 Loud noises	23 CBer's device	
16 Some TVs	42 French title	25 Donut flavor	
17 Dawn goddess	47 Madame Bovary	26 Oil cartel	
18 London insurer	48 Partially coincides	27 Skater Lipinski	
20 Discover	49 Antique cars	29 Peddle	
23 Stagger	50 Slangy denial	31 Pirate's chart	
24 Pivot line	51 Legal action	33 "Dust in the Wind" band	
25 King Arthur's realm		34 Slow-pokes	
28 Auction action		36 Cold War initials	
29 "A Farewell to Arms" director		37 Taxi alternative	
30 Nonstick spray		38 Up for it	
32 Bamboozled		39 Arsenal supply	
34 Anti-toxins		40 From the top	
		43 Lab eggs	
		44 — Claire, Wisc.	
		45 AP rival	
		46 Letters after Q	

Solution time: 21 mins.

S	T	L	A	R	A	B	T	H	I	S
I	O	U	L	O	C	O	E	A	C	H
N	D	A	M	E	T	R	O	A	R	E
G	O	U	D	A	L	P				
			E	N	I	D	D	O	T	E
G	R	A	Y	A	R	E	A	T	I	T
R	I	T	M	C	A	M	R	Y	E	T
I	T	E	M	N	O	G	O	A	R	E
M	A	N	I	A	N	O	U	N		
			G	B	S		R	O	L	E
I	N	T	H	E	A	R	E	A	E	R
V	A	S	T	I	M	A	N	T	I	A
E	B	A	Y	S	N	U	G	S	K	Y

Yesterday's Answer 01/04

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Dot-Marie Jones, 59; Dave Foley, 60; Michael Stipe, 63; Patty Loveless, 66.

Happy Birthday: Take the initiative to put your plans in motion. Aspire to what you want to become, and distance yourself from situations and people who stand between you and what you want. Use your charm and charisma to influence others to marry their concerns with yours, and you'll gain strength and admiration that will encourage positive feedback and success. Home improvements are favored. Your numbers are 5, 13, 20, 28, 35, 46, 48.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Keep life simple, doable and within your means. Focus on health and well-being, and protect your position and reputation from anyone trying to make you look bad. Be honest, straightforward and ready to stick up for yourself, your principles and what you want. ****

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): A positive change is heading your way. Step up for the occasion. Be receptive, engaging and ready to implement positive reinforcement into your daily routine. Work diligently to perfect your skills. Turn the tables on anyone trying to manipulate you. ***

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Pick up the pace, and don't stop until you are happy with the results. Go to an expert rather than relying on secondhand information. What it costs you to get the lowdown will pay off. A physical encounter will boost your ego. ***

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Verify whatever you hear before passing along information. You'll find it necessary to protect your reputation and position from someone highly competitive and intent on using underhandedness to come out on top. ***

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Pay attention to details, your appearance and how you can help others. A financial or contractual gain can change your life, but before you sign up, find out what you'll be responsible for and if there are any hidden costs. A partnership looks promising. ****

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Concentrate on completion. Once your responsibilities are taken care of, you'll be in a better frame of mind and position to focus your time and affection on someone or something that brings you joy. Don't be afraid to take the road less traveled. **

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Pay attention to how you present yourself and your skills. What you physically do to put others at ease while you market what you can offer will make a difference in the outcome. Don't let uncertainty cloud your vision. *****

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Idle time will lead to vulnerability. Map out what you want to achieve, and don't stop until you are satisfied with the results. Take a unique approach to an old problem, and you'll discover a cost-efficient way to resolve the issue. ***

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Don't deviate from the truth; question information if it lacks substance. It's up to you to nail down what's transpired, what's possible and how to handle any fallout caused by incompetence. Oversee every detail and eliminate mistakes and stress. ***

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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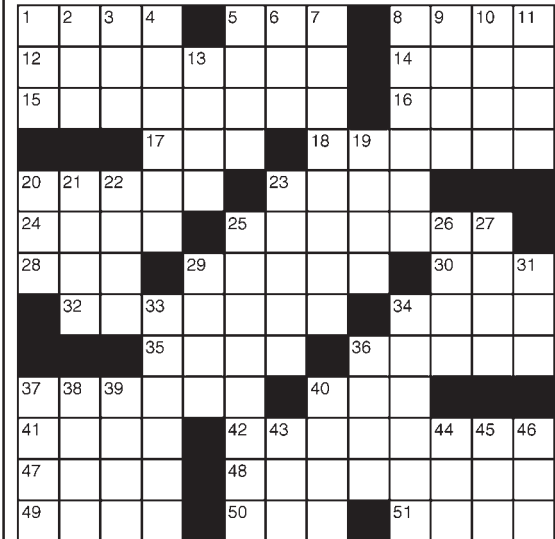
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Take your professional goals and obligations seriously. Someone will judge you on your ability to live up to your promises. Leave nothing to chance. Be demonstrative to ensure everyone gets a taste of what's to come. Stick close to home. ***

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Uncertainty will limit your ability to bring about change. Step outside your comfort zone to take care of unfinished business. Home improvements will encourage better relationships with those you are around. A physical improvement will fetch compliments and invite romance. *****

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Consider everything before you do something controversial. By aligning yourself with people trying to reach similar goals, you will save time and money collaborating. A situation involving a personal problem and authority will require compassion and discipline. 2 stars

Birthday Baby: You are proactive, inventive and ambitious. You are original and astute.

☉: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ☿: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ♋: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ♊: Aim high; start new projects. ♈: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.



SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

		1	8	9	2	6		
9							2	
5								
8	4							
		3	5	4	7	9		
						1	5	
							3	
7							8	
	8	1	5	3	4			

Difficulty Level ★★★ 1/04

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

9	8	3	4	1	5	6	2	7
4	6	5	7	2	9	1	8	3
1	7	2	6	3	8	9	5	4
7	9	4	8	6	1	5	3	2
3	2	8	5	9	7	4	1	6
5	1	6	3	4	2	8	7	9
2	4	1	9	5	3	7	6	8
8	3	9	1	7	6	2	4	5
6	5	7	2	8	4	3	9	1

Difficulty Level ★★ 1/03

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

THE LAST PIECE OF ... Solution: 6 letters

N C T D O O F Y R O M E M C C
O O L R S H R I M P S E T O N
I O I T E T I M E T P C T D G
T K U T S S E R C A A U S E N
C I Q A A A S L P S N C T T I
E E P O H M O E H O I I O A Y
S T E A K T R T D R U M C L O D
L K N U H C E O Y R M L M O U
Y O R E T T E L F S A U O C T
R E A D V I C E Z N G E D O S
E R N F I H B A D Z I N S H O
T G F O E A C S N K U S I C H
S A I E M S R A B D R P W W C
Y M S L I C E Y K I Y O ① E A
M E H A M B U R G E R I W ② N

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Advice, Cake, Candy, Cash, Cheese, Chocolate, Chunk, Cloth, Clue, Code, Cookie, Dessert, Diary, Donut, Fish, Food, Fries, Fruit, Game, Hamburger, Heart, Hope, Information, Land, Letter, Loaf, Lyrics, Memory, Money, Mystery, Nachos, News, Notes, Paper, Pastry, Pie, Puzzle, Quilt, Ribs, Section, Shrimp, Slice, Steak, Studying, Taco, Time, Toast, Wings, Wire, Wisdom, Work

Yesterday's Answer: Freestanding

The NEW Volume 70 can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

Adebayo scores 31, Heat recovers to beat Clippers, 110-100

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Bam Adebayo had 31 points and 13 rebounds and the Miami Heat recovered from blowing a 21-point lead to beat the Los Angeles Clippers 110-100 on Monday night for their second win in a row.

Tyler Herro added 23 points and Victor Oladipo had 15 off the bench for the Heat, which has won four of five. They swept the two-game season series for the first time since 2017-18.

Paul George had 25 points and seven assists to lead the Clippers, who were without Kawhi Leonard in dropping their third straight. He sat out with a non-COVID-19 illness.

Miami ran off seven straight to open the fourth and take an 88-83 lead. The Clippers pulled to 96-95 on Luke Kennard's 3-pointer. He scored eight of his 11 points in the fourth.

But George and John Wall had back-to-back turnovers and the Heat scored seven straight to go up 103-95. Miami fans chanted "Let's go Heat!" in the closing minutes.

The Heat led by 21 in the second and by 18 in the third before Los Angeles rallied.

The Clippers' starting five engineered a comeback from 18 points down in the third. George (three) and Marcus Morris (one) combined to hit four consecutive 3-pointers that capped a 28-8 run and put the Clippers ahead 77-75. It was their first lead since the opening period.

Miami's Max Strus hit a tying 3-pointer before George made a pair of free throws that sent the Clippers into the fourth leading 83-81.

Trailing by six, the Clippers opened the second with a 12-6 run to pull into a 40-all tie on Nicolas Batum's 3-pointer.

But the Heat took over from there.

Miami outscored the Clippers 27-9 to take a 67-49 lead into halftime. Herro made four 3-pointers and Strus added another as the Heat's second unit dominated.

Knicks 102, Suns 83

In New York, Julius Randle had 28 points and 16 rebounds to lead the New York Knicks to a 102-83 win over the Phoenix Suns on Monday in New York.

Jalen Brunson, who returned after missing three games with a sore right hip, scored 24 points. Immanuel Quickley scored 15 points, Quentin Grimes had 12 and Mitchell Robinson finished with 10 points and 10 rebounds for the Knicks.

Deandre Ayton led Phoenix with 12 points. Chris Paul had 11 and Mikal Bridges added 10.



Miami Heat guard Tyler Herro, left, drives to the basket against Los Angeles Clippers guard Terance Mann during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Monday, Jan. 2, 2023, in Los Angeles.

The Suns, who lost for the sixth time in their last seven games, scored the first four points of the game. The Knicks followed with the next 14 and led the rest of the way.

Monday's win snapped a three-game home losing streak.

Nets 139, Spurs 103

In New York, Kyrie Irving made his first seven shots, sparked a big bench celebration with a one-handed follow slam after he finally missed and scored 27 points as Brooklyn earned a 12th straight victory.

Kevin Durant added 25 points and 11 assists for the Nets (25-12), who have ridden the longest winning in the NBA this season to within a game of Boston for the best record in the league. Brooklyn has won 16 of its last 17 games.

Irving shot 11 for 14, Durant was 10 for 14 and neither played in the fourth quarter for the Nets, who are 23-7 under Jacque Vaughn. T.J. Warren finished with 18 points and Brooklyn shot 62% from the field.

Keldon Johnson scored 22 points for the Spurs.

76ers 120, Pelicans 111

In Philadelphia, Joel Embiid had 42 points and 11 rebounds, James Harden scored 27 and Philadelphia beat a New Orleans team that lost Zion Williamson to a strained right hamstring.

Williamson scored 26 points on 10-of-12 shooting through three quarters before he left for the locker room in

the fourth. Williamson pulled up on a fastbreak and handed off the ball late in the third. Williamson, averaging 26 points, gingerly ran to the corner and lingered on the court for a bit before he was lifted from the game.

CJ McCollum scored 26 points for the Pelicans.

Lakers 121, Hornets 115

In Charlotte, N.C., LeBron James scored 43 points to pull within 500 of Kareem Abdul-Jabbar's NBA career scoring record, and Los Angeles avenged last month's home loss to Charlotte.

James had two dunks on alley-oops, including a high-flying reverse slam off a feed from Dennis Schroder, to push his career total to 37,903 points, leaving him 484 behind Abdul-Jabbar's long-standing record of 38,387.

Thomas Bryant had 18 points and 15 rebounds, and Austin Reaves and Schroder each had 15 points as the Lakers finished a 3-2 road trip.

Terry Rozier had 27 points to lead the Hornets, who have lost 13 of their last 16 games. LaMelo Ball added 24 points and Mason Plumlee had 18 points and 14 rebounds for Charlotte.

Pacers 122, Raptors 114

In Indianapolis, Benedict Mathurin scored 21 points and Buddy Hield added 19 to lead Indiana to their fourth consecutive victory.

Myles Turner had 18 points and 11 rebounds, and Tyrese Haliburton added 16 points and eight assists for the Pacers. T.J. McConnell scored 15

off the bench.

Gary Trent Jr. scored 32 points and Pascal Siakam had 26 for Toronto. Scottie Barnes added 23.

Cavaliers 145, Bulls 134, OT

In Cleveland, Donovan Mitchell set a Cleveland record with 71 points, the most by an NBA player in 17 years, and the Cavaliers rallied from 21 down to beat Chicago in overtime.

Mitchell forced OT by grabbing his own intentionally missed free throw and making a circus-shot with 3 seconds left, tying the game at 130.

Jarrett Allen added 21 points for the Cavs and Cedi Osman scored 19.

DeMar DeRozan scored 44 points, Zach LeVine had 26 points and Nikola Vucevic added 20 points and 13 rebounds for Chicago, which did not trail in regulation.

Mavericks 111, Rockets 106

In Houston, Luka Doncic had 39 points, 12 rebounds and eight assists as Dallas rallied from an 18-point second half deficit to beat Houston for the Mavericks' seventh straight win.

Doncic scored 29 of his points in the second half to lead the comeback. Doncic has scored at least 32 points in each of the last six games, including three 50-point games during that span.

Christian Wood added 21 points, and Tim Hardaway Jr. scored 21 points for Dallas, which has their longest winning streak since the 2010-11 season.

Kevin Porter Jr. had 25

points, Jalen Green added 20 points and Eric Gordon scored 19 points for the Rockets, who lost their fourth straight and seventh straight at home.

Timberwolves 124, Nuggets 111

In Minneapolis, Anthony Edwards scored 29 points, including 15 in the third quarter, to help Minnesota withstand a push by Denver.

Jaden McDaniels had 21 points and Kyle Anderson added 19 for Minnesota, which snapped a six-game losing streak and won its fourth in a row against Denver.

Nikola Jokic finished with 24 points, seven rebounds and nine assists for the Nuggets, and Jamal Murray added 14 points after a scoreless first-half. Bones Hyland added 18 points off the bench, but Denver was undone by its sluggish start on the second game of a back-to-back following Sunday's home win against Boston.

The Nuggets had won 10 of their previous 12 games.

Warriors 143, Hawks 141, 2OT

In San Francisco, Kevon Looney tipped in the game-winner on his own offensive rebound as the final buzzer sounded in the second overtime after missing moments before, Klay Thompson scored a season-best 54 points, and the Golden State Warriors held off the Atlanta Hawks 143-141 on Monday night.

Trae Young tied the score on a layup with 8.2 seconds remaining before the Warriors' final chance. Young made four crucial free throws late in the first OT and finished with 30 points and 14 assists.

Looney had a career-high 21 rebounds to go with 14 points and five assists. Draymond Green made his only 3-point attempt of the game with 43.8 seconds left in the last OT and finished with 13 rebounds and 11 assists.

Thompson shot 21 for 39 and his 10 3-pointers matched a season high — and his 54 were six off his career-best scoring outing of 60 accomplished in three quarters on Dec. 5, 2016. He hit a go-ahead 3 with 18 seconds left in the first overtime after his tying 3 with 1:55 to go in the initial extra period.

Donte DiVincenzo corralled a crucial offensive rebound then knocked down a tying 3-pointer with 0.6 seconds remaining in regulation to send the game into OT after Thompson and Jordan Poole had each missed from long

range the same sequence.

DiVincenzo grabbed another key rebound with 1:23 left in the first extra period to help the undermanned defending champions run their season-best winning streak to five games with a sixth straight home victory.

Reigning NBA Finals MVP Stephen Curry danced in delight at outcome after missing his ninth straight game with a partially dislocated left shoulder.

Poole's 3 put Golden State ahead 129-126 with 1:35 left in the first OT. He finished with 28 points, six rebounds and five assists coming off a 40-point performance in a 118-112 win against Portland on Friday night.

John Collins scored 21 of his 25 points after halftime and dished out 13 assists as the Hawks roared back after trailing by as many as 21 in the first half. Dejounte Murray also scored 25 to go with 10 rebounds and seven assists.

All five Atlanta starters scored in double figures and six players in all, including Bogdan Bogdanovic's 21 off the bench.

Trail Blazers 135, Pistons 106

In Portland, Ore., Jerami Grant scored 36 points against his former team, Anfernee Simons added 30 and the Portland Trail Blazers beat the Detroit Pistons 135-106 on Monday night.

Gary Payton II played 14 minutes in his Portland debut, finishing with seven points, four assists and two steals. The son of Hall of Fame guard Gary Payton missed the first 35 games this season following surgery for a core muscle injury. He signed with the Trail Blazers as a free agent after winning an NBA championship with the Golden State Warriors last June.

Grant was 12 for 17 from the field, including 5 of 8 from 3-point range, and Payton's debut buoyed a Blazers team that had lost four of five.

Damian Lillard had 19 points, 10 assists and four steals.

Bojan Bogdanovic scored 21 points to lead Detroit, and Alec Burks added 19 off the bench.

Like his father, Payton attended Oregon State. He entered to an ovation and connected on his first shot — a 3-pointer from the left corner. To start the second quarter, Payton threw a lob to Shaedon Sharpe for an alley-oop. Late in the third, Payton dove on a loose ball, which led to Portland free throws and raucous cheers from the crowd as the Blazers extended their lead.

Bills' Hamlin in critical condition after collapse on field



CINCINNATI (AP)—Bills safety Damar Hamlin was in critical condition after he collapsed on the field Monday night, the NFL said, and Buffalo's game against the Cincinnati Bengals was suspended.

Hamlin was administered CPR on the field, ESPN reported, and he was surrounded by teammates, some of them in tears, after he was hurt while tackling Bengals receiver Tee Higgins.

Higgins led with his right shoulder, which hit Hamlin in the chest. Hamlin then wrapped his arms around Higgins' shoulders and helmet to drag him down. Hamlin got to his feet, appeared to adjust his face mask with his right hand, and then fell backward about three seconds later and lay motionless.

Hamlin was treated on the field by team and independent medical personnel and local paramedics, the NFL said, and he was taken by ambulance to University of Cincinnati Medical Center. Teammate Stefon Diggs later joined Hamlin at the hospital.

About 100 Bills fans and a few Bengals fans gathered on a corner one block from the emergency room entrance with some of them holding candles.

The NFL announced more than an hour after the injury that the game would not resume.

"Our thoughts are with Damar and the Buffalo Bills. We will provide more information as it becomes available," the league said in a statement. "The NFL has been in constant communication with the NFL Players Association which is in agreement with postponing the game."

An ambulance was on the field four minutes after Hamlin collapsed, with many players in tears, including cornerback Tre'Davious White. The quarterbacks — Buffalo's



The Buffalo Bills players pray for teammate Damar Hamlin during the first half of an NFL football game against the Cincinnati Bengals, Monday, Jan. 2, 2023, in Cincinnati. AP

Josh Allen and Cincinnati's Joe Burrow — embraced.

"Please pray for our brother," Allen tweeted.

Hamlin collapsed at 8:55 p.m., and when he was taken off the field about 19 minutes later, the Bills gathered in prayer. A few minutes after the ambulance left the field, the game was suspended, and players walked off the field slowly and into their locker rooms.

Hamlin's uniform was cut off and he appeared to be getting CPR from medical personnel. ESPN reported on its telecast that Hamlin was also given oxygen.

"No one's been through this," Pro Football Hall of Fame quarterback Troy Aikman said on the ESPN tele-

cast. "I've never seen anything like it, either."

The Bengals led 7-3 in the first quarter of a game between teams vying for the top playoff seed in the AFC. Cincinnati entered at 11-4 and leading the AFC North by one game over Baltimore, while AFC East champion Buffalo was 12-3.

"The NFLPA and everyone in our community is praying for Damar Hamlin," the players' union said in a statement. "We have been in touch with Bills and Bengals players, and with the NFL. The only thing that matters at this moment is Damar's health and well being."

It was unknown when or if the game would resume as the NFL enters the final week of

the regular season. The outcome has major playoff implications with the wild-card round scheduled to begin on Jan. 14.

The aftermath of the injury was reminiscent of when Bills tight end Kevin Everett lay motionless on the field after making a tackle on the second-half opening kickoff in Buffalo's 2007 season-opening game against the Denver Broncos.

Everett sustained a spinal cord injury that initially left him partially paralyzed.

The 24-year-old Hamlin spent five years of college at Pittsburgh — his hometown — and appeared in 48 games for the Panthers over that span. He was a second-team All-ACC performer as a se-

nior, was voted a team captain and was picked to play in the Senior Bowl.

He was drafted in the sixth round by the Bills in 2021, played in 14 games as a rookie and then became a starter this year once Micah Hyde was lost for the season to injury.

By late Monday night, a community toy drive organized by Hamlin had surged to more than \$1.2 million in donations. His stated goal was \$2,500.

Kathryn Bersani and her mother, Gayle, were among the Bills fans who traveled from Buffalo for the game and went to the hospital from the stadium.

"This is our family Christmas," Kathryn Bersani said.

"We thought it would be a great game. Joe (Burrow) and Josh (Allen) are such great men. Sad, sad time. Such a shock. I just hope he can live a normal life. It stunned us."

Chuck and Janet Kohl went to the hospital after watching the game at home.

"This is much more important than football," Chuck Kohl said. "Had to come and pray for Mr. Hamlin."

Entering the game, the 6-foot, 200-pound Hamlin had 91 tackles, including 63 solo tackles, and 1 1/2 sacks.

A tweet from the Pitt football account was simple and clear: "Damar Hamlin is the best of us. We love you, 3," the tweet said, referring to Hamlin by his college jersey number. "Praying for you."

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—Quarterback Joshua Dobbs will make a second straight start Saturday night in Jacksonville with the Titans' playoff hopes on the line despite being signed Dec. 21 off Detroit's practice squad.

"Josh will be our quarterback," Titans coach Mike Vrabel said Monday. "I've talked to both quarterbacks and let them know that Josh will be our quarterback for this week, and then Malik (Willis) has to continue to prepare like a starter."

The Titans (7-9) can win their third straight AFC South

Vrabel plays no games: Titans starting Dobbs at QB vs Jags

title with a victory Saturday night. That would give them a home playoff game along with snapping a six-game skid that has seen Dobbs as the third different quarterback to start since Tennessee's previous win Nov. 17 at Green Bay.

Tennessee started Dobbs, who just made his first NFL start in a 27-13 loss to Dallas last Thursday night hours after putting 11-year veteran Ryan Tannehill on injured reserve. Willis was the Titans' third-round draft pick by general manager Jon Robinson,

who was fired Dec. 6.

The six-year veteran had more yards passing by half-time of his Titans' debut than Willis managed in any of his three starts and eight appearances.

Dobbs finished with 232 yards passing, almost as much as Willis had had combined (276) this season. Willis has been intercepted three times with his only TD off a run.

Vrabel made it clear they've been impressed with Dobbs' work ethic, noting the quarterback has worked hard

the past couple of days.

Helping the former University of Tennessee star is he has a degree in aerospace engineering and spent two years at NASA's Kennedy Space Flight Center as part of the NFLPA's program.

Dobbs was a fourth-round pick by Pittsburgh in 2017 and now has appeared in seven games. He played in five with the Steelers in 2018 and one in 2020. He spent 2019 with Jacksonville after the Jaguars traded for him to help back up Gardner Minshew af-

ter Nick Foles broke his collarbone.

The newest Titans starter also will have a full week of practice as compared to prepping for one game as a backup signed four days before his Tennessee debut. Dobbs then had five days to prepare for the first start of his NFL career.

Now the Titans can see how much Dobbs can absorb with an emphasis on red zone plays.

"There'll be some things that we will try to add or may-

be things that we practiced last week that we didn't run," Vrabel said. "Well, I think it's just going to be good to have a full week."

The Jaguars (8-8) won the first game between these teams Dec. 11 thanks to four turnovers leading to 20 points in a 36-22 victory in Nashville with Tannehill starting. The Titans rested Derrick Henry along with six other starters against Dallas. Vrabel said that will only help depending on how the Titans play.

"Hopefully we've taken advantage of the time," Vrabel said.

San Antonio records 2nd win in women's caging

By MARK RABAGO

mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

San Antonio won only its second straight game in the women's division of the 2022 Marianas Village Pride Basketball League last Dec. 27 at the Gillette Multi-Purpose Center.

San Antonio's Kaitlyn Chavez was engaged in a scoring duel with San Vicente's Destiny Pangelinan all game long. But in the end, the former had more support as San Antonio won 62-45 to improve to 2-6, while dealing San Vicente its third loss in seven outings.

Curiously, it was Aaleyah Fatialofa who started hostilities for San Antonio as she punctured the hoops for 12 points in the first 20 minutes of action to

tow her team to a 29-18 lead at the half.

Pangelinan was a one-man wrecking crew for San Vicente, firing all but 4 of her team's 18 points in the first half.

Chavez then beat San Vicente's whole point total in the first half, exploding for 19 of her 25 total points to lead her team to the 17-point romp.

Fatialofa finished with 19 points and Mia Abuan 12 for San Antonio, while Pangelinan tossed in a game-high 35 markers.

In other games last Dec. 27, Tanapag leaned on Louis Rectitud's late-game heroics to edge Finasisu, 46-45, in the boys 13 division.

Rectitud scored his team's last 5 points to finish with 10

points. Dane Tibayan's 14 markers led Tanapag, which improved to 6-2 in the season.

Jairus Pangelinan was brilliant in defeat, pumping in 17 points for the now 3-5 Finasisu squad.

In the boys 18, Dandan kept San Vicente winless in five games while evening its record to 2-2 following a 66-36 demolition job.

Marl Balignasay paced Dandan's balanced attack with 14 points, while the 11 of Kobe Imperial led San Vicente.

Last Dec. 26, Kagman remained atop the totem pole in the boys 13 after drubbing winless Garapan, 55-23.

Peyton Pangelinan's 11 points paced the now 7-1 Kagman team, while Leon Galarse shot 15 points in Garapan's

eighth consecutive loss.

Dandan still leads the women's division after edging Garapan, 34-29. Connie Camacho had 12 points in Dandan's fifth win in six tries, while the now 3-3 Garapan was led by the 10 points of Madeleine Alegre.

In the boys 18, Koblerville drew four double-digit scoring games from its players as they beat Chalan Kiya, 65-39.

Koblerville, which improved to 4-1, was spearheaded by the 19 points of Justin Mateo, while D.K. Fiden (15), Airson Atan (14), and Tynk Basa (10) also came away with 10 or more points.

Lushawn Reyes' 16 markers paced Chalan Kiya, which has just one win in five tries so far this season.

San Antonio 62 – Chavez 25, Aa. Fatialofa 19, Abuan

12, Enriquez 6.

San Vicente 45 – Pangelinan 35, Deleon Guerrero 4, Cabrera

2, Roligat 2.

Scoring by halves: 29-18, 62-45.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

San Antonio's Kaitlyn Chavez drives to the hoop in this file photo against Garapan in the women's division of the 2022 Marianas Village Pride Basketball League at the Gillette Multi-Purpose Center.

VOLLEYBAKERS

From Page 20

heavy and fast right hand smacks of Monterubio and Buquiles—brought them out of the trenches of a 7-point deficit and took the lead. It was smooth sailing from there as the GG's ran out of gas and could not come back to force a tie-breaking third set and fell to the Volleybakers.

The Volleybakers finished the season strong with an 8-0 card and made their way to the finals after defeating Saluta's Helpers in the semifinals last Thursday.

Some players of the team were on the first championship

team from 2019—Sweet Digs, including Esteves, Velasco, Guevarra, and Masga.

After the game, Baquiles said she was "overwhelmed because of the support of the team and our coach [Iszel Esteves]; we were able to fight until the end."

With their young team, Esteves said they weren't expecting to come out of the tournament undefeated. "Most of our teammates are beginners. There are only maybe three or four players from the old team. So most of our teammates are beginners and like three of them are under 16 years old. But it was a good opportunity for the youth to mix with us so

they can learn as well and blend in with other players."

On coaching the team, Esteves said it wasn't hard. "They're really coachable. They really listened to whatever I said, so I'm just trying my best to teach them from my experience... If it's an easy opponent, don't underestimate them, so just play hard. They will give their all so you have to give your all too."

As to why their team was named Volleybakers, their team's sponsor is Timothy Baker and a father of one of their teammates, Helen Baker.

Baquiles then thanked their supporters, everyone who watched, Agape Christian

School for hosting the tournament, and their team's sponsor Timothy Baker.

"We were really looking forward to this ever since they posted it and it's always fun to see all the volleyball lovers come together, play, and share sportsmanship and camaraderie with each other," said Baquiles.

En Yang Pang, coordinator of the event, congratulated the winning teams and thanked all the players who joined and the fans who came out to support, along with the sponsors Agape Christian School for the facilities, Gold's Gym Saipan, Fishing Tackle & Sporting Goods, and F&S Corp. for a successful tournament.

TANG

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said Eamon.

When asked if he expected to top his division, he said "I didn't before the race, but not many joined my age division, so I expected to finish highly."

For the inaugural baby stroller division, Kerri Bauer and her 5-month-old baby were the lone participants and clocked in at 8:22.

The mother of four told *Saipan Tribune*, "I think it's great to have a division for moms and dads who want to include their little ones in the races. I do most of my training with my kids so why not include them on race day. I have four kids total [ages] 9, 7, 5, and then a 5-month-old, so my older kids are able to run now too." Her son, Beau, was second in the 14-and-under division.

When asked about the inclusion of the division, she said "I hope this continues and more parents can see that they don't have to stop or they can start competing with their kids in strollers. It helps kids to see

how strong we are as parents," said Bauer.

In the men's open age division, all runners came in under 6 minutes with Sildrey Veloria leading the way with his 5:04 time; Jalen Lucido clocked in second at 5:39; and Aaron Pamintuan ran a 5:50 mile.

Jeane Bracken topped the women's open age division at 9:10; followed by Arriane Antonio with 9:17; and Heather Camacho at 10:07.

The men's age group of 45-49 was won by Dr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero with a time of 6:43; the women's age group was led by Rosemarie Chisato with a time of 6:34 and Ann Bang behind her at 6:51.

Matthew Furan topped the men's 50-54 age group with a time of 5:43; Roger James Sardea clocked in at 6:21; and James Abuy came in at 8:52.

In the women's 50-54 age group, Jessica Ortizo sped through at 6:58; Elizabeth Church had an 8:12 mile; and Leonora Abuy clocked in at 8:51.

Dr. Ron Snyder and Kim Church are the lone participants of the 55-59 age group



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Eamon Tang topped the 14-and-under division of the Run from '22 Mile Race held last Saturday in Marpi. Also in photo are Run Saipan president Edward Dela Cruz Jr., left, and board member Robin Sapong.

and came in at 9:10 and 9:05 respectively.

For the 60-year-old and up age group, barefoot runner

Chong Nam Lee came in at 5:46; Edgar Abalos had a 6:39 mile; and Paul Khang came in after at 6:59.

PETER

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which include volunteer reimbursement, such as the \$500 check," he said.

That was when Patricia Bermudes Aldan allegedly doctored checks issued by the MGOC and defrauded the organizing committee of \$46,000.

"If you recall, the fraudulent check reimbursement made by Patricia Aldan is a case that is still ongoing which only magnified the issue of voluntary checks being held," added Peter.

Last August, the Department of Public Safety said it was on the hunt for Aldan in connection with the theft of \$46,000 from the MGOC.

According to a DPS news release, the department received a 911 call last Aug. 2 at about 9:43am, about a forgery and theft incident.

The caller told police that they were reviewing the funds from the Mini Games bank account when they noticed that a payout of \$46,027, was made to Aldan. Upon further review, it was found that Aldan was a temporary employee for the MGOC and was originally given a check for \$27, for mileage reimbursement.

MGOC members stated that the original check amount was changed from \$27 to \$46,027 with two signatures of its committee members signed on the forged check without their knowledge.

On the same day, Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph

N. Camacho signed an arrest warrant for Aldan, but the police were unable to find her. On Aug. 3, 2022, police were able to confirm that Aldan had fled the island in the afternoon of Aug. 2, 2022, on Jeju Airlines with no written final destination.

A 47-year-old technical official, who wants to remain anonymous, said she had mixed emotions after volunteering in the Mini Games.

"I am just grateful to be part of such a monumental event as a volunteer. I wasn't expecting any compensation as a technical official for the Mini Games. I'm just surprised why volunteers are paid. The check I thought was a gesture of goodwill. Unfortunately, it was false hope," she said.

A 54-year-old volunteer, who also wanted anonymity, said she also didn't expect to get paid.

"I love to support these events, especially triathlon. But because I received a check as an incentive, I thought they were being generous and grateful for the work we put in for the Mini Games."

Instead, she said it became more of an insult as other technical officials were able to get their money.

"For the few of us that received it months later and with no funds it was a slap on the face. We were the few that weren't on the top of their list. I've reached out to the responsible parties, but to no avail. They say when funding is available, then we'll get our money. I hope it will be soon though," she said.



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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Volleybakers takes Agape v-ball tiara

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

The women of Volleybakers—some of whom may or may not be bakers, but are definitely volleyball players—defeated GG'z in the finale of the 4th Annual Agape Christmas Volleyball Tournament last Friday at the Agape Gymnasium.

The Volleybakers, which was led by team captain Alisa Baquiles, Fatima Monterubio, Angel Calage, Cecile Guevarra, Julie Capayas, Helen Baker, Michelle Masga, Haram Lee, Alyssa Velasco, Julie Harrison, and Iszel Esteves, emerged from the tournament unscathed with no losses and clinched the women's division champion-



LEIGH GASES
Volleybakers is the women's division champions of the 4th Annual Agape Christmas Volleyball Tournament after defeating GG'z last Friday at the Agape Gymnasium.

ship in two sets, 25-21, 25-21. In what seemed to be a loss for the Volleybakers in the first set, they overcame their nerves and came back to win after coming from behind. A couple of misplaced serves

from the GG'z and missed returns allowed the Volleybakers to capitalize. GG'z in the second set were running on fumes as early on, they were leading from a few well placed serves which

handed them a couple of aces. But then, a plethora of spikes and well placed shots from the Volleybakers—most of which came from the
See VOLLEYBAKERS on Page 19

Tang brothers top youth age groups in mile run



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Simon Tang topped the 18-and-under division of the Run from '22 Mile Race held last Saturday in Marpi. Also in photo is Run Saipan president Edward Dela Cruz Jr.

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

A couple of brothers dominated the youth divisions of the Run Saipan's second 1-mile race dubbed Run from '22 Mile Race on New Year's Eve last Saturday from the Buddhist Temple in Marpi to the former Mariana Resort & Spa.

Fifteen-year-old Simon Tang and brother, 12-year-old Eamon Tang ruled the two youth divisions in the fastest and last race of the year. Simon clocked in with a time of 5:06 and Eamon clocked in at 7:52.

In the 18-and-under division, Rex Pixley was 4 seconds behind Simon with a time of 5:10. Theodore Rodgers completed the Top 3 with a time of 5:33.

In the 14-and-under division behind Eamon, is Beau Bauer with a time of 8:14.

Simon, originally a tennis

player, said about the race, "The race felt very competitive, having to run with the open felt like a good experience. This race was my PR, mainly because of the course. The course was breezy and was especially easy since it was downhill."

The sophomore at Saipan Southern High School added, "I certainly did not think I would've topped my division, especially with the other very experienced runners in my age group."

His brother, Eamon, said for his part, "It felt easy going through the race. I was running [a] 5K pace as the race felt shorter and easier than expected."

"Even though I didn't run an all-out mile pace, it still was my PR. This is one of my first races as I'm not originally a runner. The race felt easy and much faster than I expected, since it was downhill,"

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Peter assures all obligations will be resolved



QUINN BREADY
Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games Organizing Committee chair Marco Peter during the closing ceremonies of the Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games 2022 last June 25 at the Oleai Sports Complex.

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games Organizing Committee is assuring vendors and volunteers that they will pay the money owed to them.

This, after several social media posts showed that a number of volunteers—who weren't promised monetary compensation in the first place—received checks that bounced when they tried to eventually encash them.

"All obligations including

volunteer reimbursements will be resolved," said MGOC chair Marco Peter.

The former lawmaker said the issue on the bounced checks was unfortunate and stemmed from a former MGOC staff encashing a fraudulent check reimbursement.

"There was a time when the Mini Games account was compromised and we had to hold outstanding checks. We're working diligently with the Bank of Guam to resolve these outstanding payments

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